



# Fund Mental Health Clinics Fairly

Support [S760](#)/[H2006](#)

- Across the Commonwealth, vulnerable individuals, children, and families continue to wait months to access basic mental health treatment services in their own communities.
- In a 2022 Issue Brief, ABH found that children and youth seeking ongoing therapy waited on average 16 weeks before they were able to access care. Adults were forced to wait an average of 13 weeks. <sup>1</sup>
- In addition, more clinicians are leaving work in mental health clinics than can be hired. For every **10 clinicians entering work** in mental health clinics, **13 clinicians leave**. <sup>1</sup> This will only continue to exacerbate the problem.
- A robustly funded clinic system could **EXPAND ACCESS** to services and **TRAIN** the clinicians of tomorrow. Clinics are the **SOLUTION** to the dual problems of limited access to community-based services and insufficient number of clinicians available to meet the demand for services.
- MassHealth has established a new initiative in a subset of regionally designated mental health and substance use treatment centers called the Community Behavioral Health Center (CBHC) program. However, only **26 of more than 400 licensed mental health clinics in Massachusetts are CBHCs**.
- **This bill would offer the additional funding needed at the hundreds of mental health clinics that exist outside the CBHC system across the Commonwealth.**
- The bill requires Mass Health to: (1) increase rates paid for all mental health outpatient services by 5%; and (2) ensure that rates paid to mental health clinics remain 20% above other settings.
- Mental health clinics have specific requirements above and beyond other outpatient settings, including:
  - Must offer access to multidisciplinary provider teams, including psychiatry;
  - Must offer extensive treatment planning for clients, staff trainings, establish referral systems, and coordinate with medical care; and
  - Are often co-located with case management, care coordination, & recovery services.
- These 26 CBHCs cannot meet the mental health care needs for the entire state. We need a healthy clinic system to ensure that CBHCs can refer clients to outpatient care and to support the mental health workforce.
- These clinics are an essential, critical part of the system and **must receive increased funding to survive and thrive**. [S760](#) and [H2006](#) are the legislative vehicles to ensure that this happens.

Questions or more information? Contact Lydia Conley at the Association for Behavioral Healthcare, [lconley@abhmass.org](mailto:lconley@abhmass.org)

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.abhmass.org/images/resources/ABH\\_OutpatientMHAcessWorkforce/Outpatient\\_survey\\_issue\\_brief\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.abhmass.org/images/resources/ABH_OutpatientMHAcessWorkforce/Outpatient_survey_issue_brief_FINAL.pdf)