

# Association for Behavioral Healthcare



**FY 2018**  
**Annual Report**



# A Letter to Our Members

Dear Members,

We are honored to present to you the Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Report for the Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. and the Association for Behavioral Healthcare Foundation, Inc. (ABH).

This year's report highlights some of our accomplishments and work during the past year, including the FY 2019 budget, our continuing *All Politics is Local* initiative, our extensive work around the Commonwealth's design and implementation of the 1115 waiver, and our celebration of the extraordinary individuals we honored at our annual Salute to Excellence.

In the coming year, we know that we will continue to battle the opioid epidemic and fight for adequate rates for providers. We also look forward to building on our successes, such as the passage of federal loan repayment programs for addiction treatment providers and expanded access to Medication Assisted Treatment (MATs) in correctional facilities.

As always, we are extremely grateful for the support of our members. Your commitment to improving the behavioral health system in Massachusetts is unparalleled and we are honored to work along side you. We are proud to serve you; your collective strength drives change and we look forward to continuing to work with you in the year ahead.

Thank you!

Sincerely,



Diane Gould, Chair  
Board of Directors



Vicker V. DiGravio III  
President/CEO



Diane Gould, Chair  
Board of Directors



Vic DiGravio  
President/CEO

# Member Engagement

Each year, we challenge ourselves to increase our engagement with our members. Here's a look at this year's numbers:

**16%**

Increase in face-to-face contacts with our members over FY '17.

Site visits by ABH staff.

**55**

**2,993**

In person contacts with staff from member organizations.

*Association meetings*

*ABH committee meetings*

*Webinars*

*Site Visits*

*Ongoing communications via phone, email, text and social media*

# MassHealth, ACOs & BH CPs

ABH hosted five webinars detailing different aspects of the new accountable care structure. Over 800 staff from ABH member organizations participated.

ABH is a member of EOHHS' Delivery System Reform Incentive Council. ABH staff were active participants in monthly meetings with MassHealth and BSAS on issues around the substance use disorder portions of the waiver.

The Commonwealth's design and implementation of the 1115 waiver concerning accountable care was a significant focus for us during FY18. Our work in this area was multifaceted, including initiatives to educate and prepare our members for the transition to accountable care and advocacy on behalf of our members with MassHealth.

ABH focused extensive resources on the design and implementation of Behavioral Health Community Partners (BH CPs). ABH successfully advocated to expand the pool of individuals eligible to serve as Clinical Care Managers and held weekly phone calls with EOHHS on BH CP design and implementation issues.

ABH hosted an Association Meeting featuring EOHHS Assistant Secretary Dan Tsai which gave ABH members an opportunity to provide feedback to MassHealth and ask questions about the initial rollout of Accountable Care Organizations.

ABH worked closely with the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers to administer workforce development programs for staff at community health centers and community behavioral health organizations.

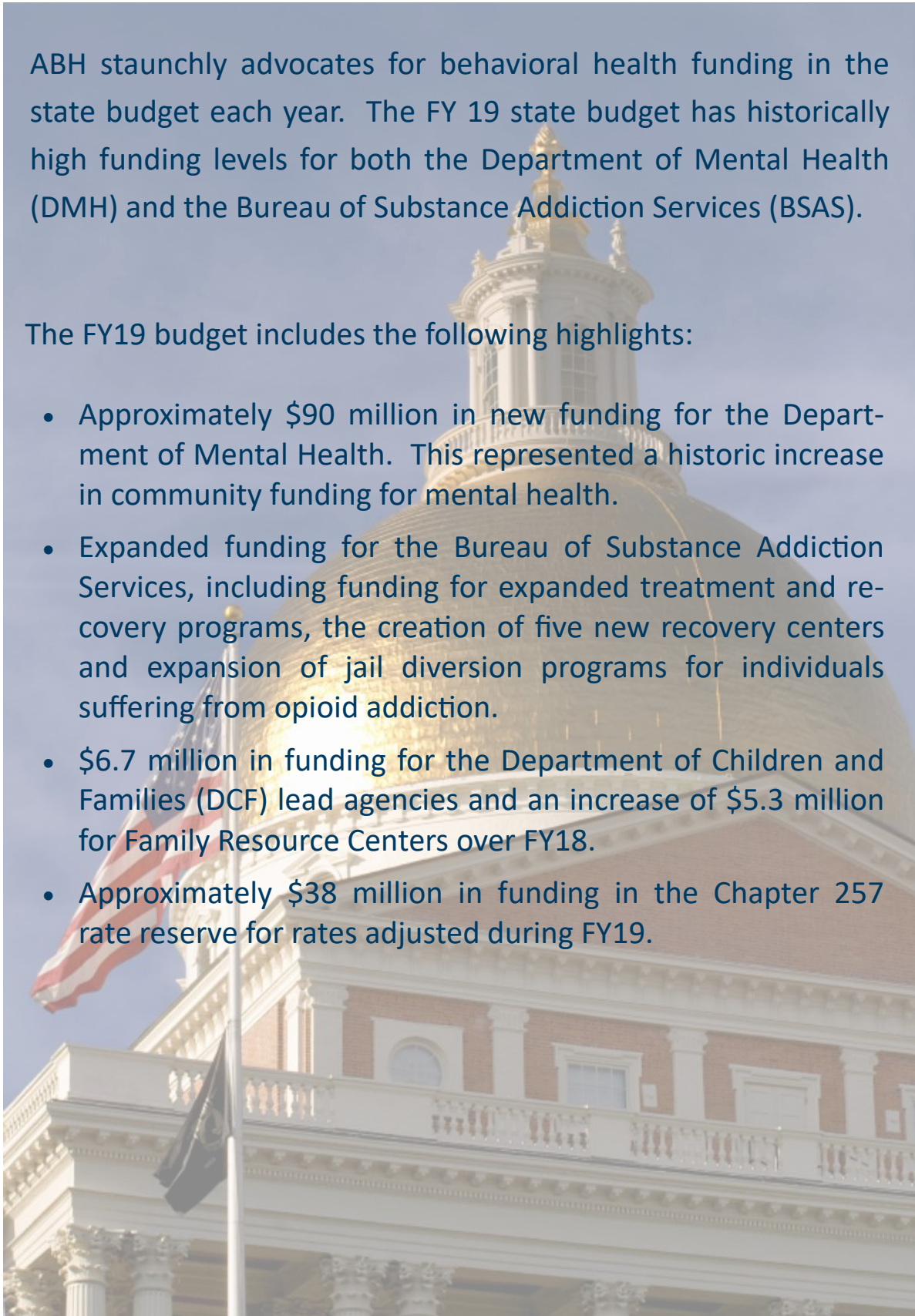


# State Budget

ABH staunchly advocates for behavioral health funding in the state budget each year. The FY 19 state budget has historically high funding levels for both the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS).

The FY19 budget includes the following highlights:

- Approximately \$90 million in new funding for the Department of Mental Health. This represented a historic increase in community funding for mental health.
- Expanded funding for the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services, including funding for expanded treatment and recovery programs, the creation of five new recovery centers and expansion of jail diversion programs for individuals suffering from opioid addiction.
- \$6.7 million in funding for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) lead agencies and an increase of \$5.3 million for Family Resource Centers over FY18.
- Approximately \$38 million in funding in the Chapter 257 rate reserve for rates adjusted during FY19.



# ABH Legislative Priorities

## Medication Assisted Treatment in Correctional Settings

Expanding access to Medication Assisted Treatments (MATs) in correctional settings was one of our top legislative priorities in FY18. ABH led a coalition of twenty-six medical, patient, and legal advocacy groups to insert language into the Governor's CARE Act legislation to expand access to MATs in state and county correctional facilities. This was an extremely challenging issue for our coalition, but in the end we were successful in adding language into the final bill signed by the Governor that expands access to MATs in certain DOC and county facilities.

Additionally, the CARE Act requires acute care hospitals that provide emergency services and satellite emergency facilities to maintain the ability to induce MAT for patients when it's appropriate before discharge while also connecting these individuals with treatment in the community.

ABH has engaged with the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association (MHA) as they work to support their members through the implementation of this new requirement. MHA and ABH believe there are many opportunities for hospitals to partner with community behavioral health providers in order to make the connections necessary to offer clients the best and most appropriate care.

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## Behavioral Health Insurance "Clawbacks"

ABH's other legislative priority focused on our legislation limiting the ability of insurers to retroactively "clawback" payments made to providers for services rendered in accordance with all relevant government and payer rules and regulations. Insurance clawbacks have been a long-standing problem for ABH members.

At the end of the legislative session, ABH negotiated compromise legislative language with EOHHS to ensure their support of the bill. As part of that compromise, EOHHS agreed to establish an administrative process by which providers will be held harmless from retroactive recoupments in instances where the Commonwealth's Eligibility Verification System (EVS) provided incorrect information to providers about which MassHealth plan was responsible for a client's coverage on the date of service. Additionally, EOHHS committed to resolving all outstanding payments to providers for instances where such recoupments have previously occurred.

# All Politics is Local

Much of our advocacy success is related directly to the high level of engagement our members have with their local elected officials. ABH continued to emphasize the importance of local engagement in FY18 through our *All Politics is Local* initiative.

Again this year, ABH challenged our member organizations to host a site visit with every legislator that represents its catchment area.

The ABH member organization that hosted the most legislative site visits in FY18 was honored as ABH's All Politics is Local Champion.

This year we were pleased to honor **YOU, Inc.** and **Child and Family Services** as our **2018 All Politics is Local Co-Champions** for hosting the most legislative site visits.

ABH also recognized all members who hosted at least five legislative site visits.

110

Visits to programs by elected officials

Including:

1 U.S. Senator

5 members of Congress

3 District Attorneys

16 State Senators

56 State Representatives

7 Mayors

7 City Councillors



# All Politics is Local



# Policy Advocacy

## Outpatient Rates

Throughout FY18, ABH continued to highlight forcefully the ongoing crisis in access to behavioral health outpatient services. While we have a tremendous amount of work ahead of us, we did make progress in FY18 towards higher MassHealth reimbursement rates for outpatient services. Effective March 1, 2018, all MassHealth ACOs and MCOs were required to pay floor rates for a range of outpatient and diversionary services. In most cases, these floor rates resulted in increased reimbursement rates for outpatient providers.

Additionally, ABH secured \$4 million in the FY19 budget to help bring MassHealth Fee-For-Service rates up to the same floor as the ACO/MCO rates.

## Children's Services

During FY18 ABH worked with our members to highlight for the Department of Children and Families (DCF) the troublesome trend of 51As being filed inappropriately on provider staff. This trend has had a chilling effect on workforce retention. As a result of our advocacy, DCF agreed to establish a workgroup consisting of DCF senior staff and provider representatives to examine issues and identify solutions related to this problem.

ABH worked closely with our colleagues at the Children's League, maaps (Massachusetts Association of 766 Approved Private Schools) and the Providers' Council in FY18 to push back on new policies implemented around background record checks for provider staff. These new requirements are very problematic for providers for a number of different reasons. ABH continues to be engaged with our advocacy partners in FY19 in trying to mitigate the impact of these new policies.

## Chapter 257

ABH, in partnership with *The Collaborative*, continued to address issues around *Chapter 257*. A number of services received biennial rate adjustments during the year. The Commonwealth has now made implementing these biennial rate increases a regular course of business for the state. This is a significant achievement given where we were as an industry prior to passage of *Chapter 257*.

This year, the Commonwealth engaged in a full rate review for both ATS (detox) and CSS (detox step-down) services which resulted in significant rate increases for providers.

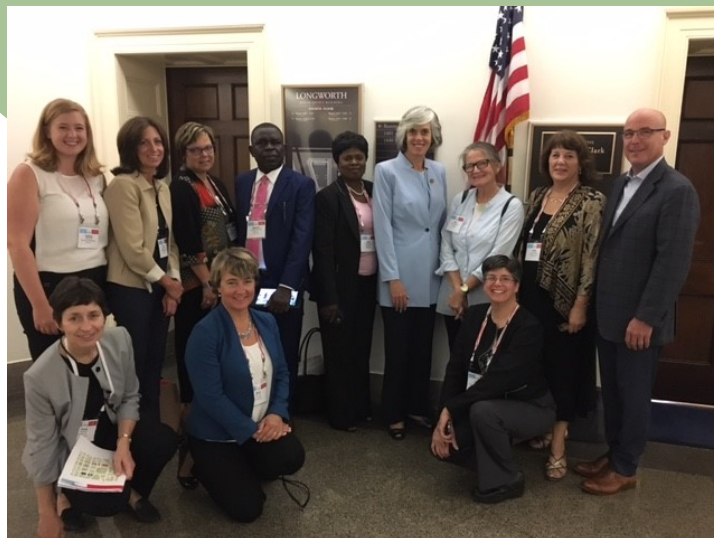
# National Advocacy



ABH works with the National Council and our Congressional representatives on issues that impact access to community behavioral health services. ABH took part in two “Hill Days” during FY18 and we consistently have one of the largest delegations of providers at Hill Day.

As a direct result of our advocacy, Congresswoman Katherine Clark filed legislation to expand federal loan repayment programs to individuals working in community addiction treatment organizations. ABH worked closely with the Congresswoman’s staff throughout the legislative process and this legislation was signed into law in the fall of 2018 as part of a larger opioid legislation package.

This new law will play an essential role in supporting individuals who choose to work in the addiction field by allowing them to access student loan forgiveness. It includes and encourages the participation of a wide variety of professionals and paraprofessionals. We are extremely grateful for the work of Congresswoman Clark and her staff on this issue.



# Salute to Excellence

Each October we gather together to celebrate the accomplishments of amazing individuals who work for our member organizations. Our Salute to Excellence is, quite possibly, our favorite day of the year and we were honored to salute our awardees:

*Robert Dorwart, M.D. Award for Mental Health*

**Marsha Medalie**, Riverside Community Care

*Moe Armstrong Award for Peer Leadership*

**Zohreh King**, North Suffolk Mental Health Association, Inc.

*Elizabeth Funk Emerging Leader Award*

**Hillary Dubois Farquharson**, High Point Treatment Center

*Excellence in Administration & Finance*

**Jenny Schreiber**, ServiceNet

*Excellence in Best Practices*

**Project Turnabout**, Spectrum Health Systems, Inc.

*Excellence in Outcomes*

**Dr. Mary Anna Sullivan**, Lahey Health Behavioral Services

*Excellence in Program Leadership*

**Dr. John Nestor**, Amesbury Psychological Center, Inc.

**Melissa Porter**, Center for Human Development, Inc.

**Meri-Ellen Morgans**, The Brien Center for Mental Health &  
Substance Abuse Service







# Training Opportunities

At ABH, we believe that we can always learn something new. As a result of this steadfast belief, we strive to provide exceptional learning opportunities and trainings to our members.

Just a few of our meetings and trainings from the past year:

- Improving Client Outcomes Through Culturally Competent Care
- “Office Hours” with EOHHS Assistant Secretary Dan Tsai
- ABH Webinar Series: MassHealth Transformation
- ABH Annual Meeting with guest speaker Senator Cindy Friedman, Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Mental Health and Substance Use and Recovery.



# ABH Committees

ABH's 20 committees are a cornerstone of our organization and most are open to all members—from front-line staff to CEOs. They play an essential role setting ABH's agenda and they identify pertinent issues to be addressed by ABH staff.

A full list of committees, including detailed descriptions, is available at [www.ABHmass.org](http://www.ABHmass.org).

What members are saying about our committees:

The group is fantastic. We constantly learn from each other...I find the committee to be welcoming, kind and informative.

Great group! Everyone is helpful to each other and willing to discuss openly. It's very helpful to hear how other agencies manage requirements.

I enjoy the ability to check in with like-minded colleagues in regard to the unique nature of the work we provide.

The ABH outpatient committee remains my most reliable source of timely information.

I like the opportunity for collaboration between all providers. No one is "territorial" with their information and everyone is willing to share their practices and learn from each other.

A valuable resource and sounding board for compliance officers.

Everyone has a chance to weigh in with their concerns.

Opportunities provided to share strengths, challenges, gaps and ideas and to actively brainstorm solutions and take action.

# ABH Member Organizations

Acadia Healthcare/Habit OPCO  
Adcare Educational Institute, Inc.  
Addiction Treatment Center of New England, Inc.  
Advocates, Inc.  
Alternatives Unlimited, Inc.  
Amesbury Psychological Center, Inc.  
The Arc of South Norfolk  
BAMSI  
Bay Cove Human Services  
Bay State Community Services, Inc.  
Behavioral Health Network, Inc.  
Boston Alcohol and Substance Abuse Programs, Inc.  
Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program  
Boston Public Health Commission  
The Bridge of Central Massachusetts, Inc.  
Bridgewell  
The Brien Center for Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services  
Brookline Community Mental Health Center  
Cambridge Health Alliance  
Cape Cod Healthcare Centers for Behavioral Health  
Casa Esperanza  
Catholic Charities Family Counseling and Guidance Center  
Center for Human Development, Inc.  
Child & Family Services, Inc.  
Children's Friend, Inc.  
Children's Services of Roxbury  
Clinical and Support Options, Inc.  
Community Counseling of Bristol County, Inc.  
Community Services Institute  
Community Substance Abuse Centers  
Cutchins Programs for Children and Families  
Dimock Community Health Center  
The Edinburg Center  
Eliot Community Human Services  
Family Service Association  
Family Service of Greater Boston  
Fenway Health  
FHR  
Gandara Center  
Gosnold on Cape Cod  
High Point Treatment Center  
The Home for Little Wanderers  
Hope House Addiction Services

Institute for Health and Recovery  
Italian Home for Children, Inc.  
Jewish Family and Children's Services (JF&CS)  
Judge Baker Children's Center  
Justice Resource Institute (JRI)  
The KEY Program, Inc.  
Lahey Health Behavioral Services  
Lowell Community Health Center, Inc.  
Lowell House, Inc.  
LUK, Inc.  
Martha's Vineyard Community Services  
Mental Health Association  
MHA of Greater Lowell  
Middlesex Human Service Agency, Inc.  
New Life Counseling & Wellness Center, Inc.  
NFI Massachusetts, Inc.  
North Charles, Inc.  
North Cottage Program, Inc.  
The Northeast Center for Youth and Families  
North Suffolk Mental Health Association, Inc.  
Old Colony YMCA  
Phoenix Houses of New England, Inc.  
Pine Street Inn  
Riverside Community Care  
ServiceNet  
South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc. (SMOC)  
South Bay Community Services  
South End Community Health  
South Shore Mental Health  
Spectrum Health Systems, Inc.  
SSTAR  
Steppingstone, Incorporated  
Toward Independent Living and Learning, TILL, Inc.  
Trauma & Family Integration (TFI), Inc.  
UMass Memorial Community Healthlink, Inc.  
Veterans Inc.  
Victory Programs, Inc.  
Vinfen  
Volunteers of America of Massachusetts, Inc.  
Walker, Inc.  
Wayside Youth & Family Support Network  
YOU, Inc.  
Youth Villages of Massachusetts and New Hampshire

## Associate Members

AAFCPA (Alexander Aronson Finning CPAs)  
AdvantEdge  
Advocates for Human Potential  
Donald Siddell, MSW  
eHana

Hirsch, Roberts, and Weinstein  
Marsh & McLennan Agency  
Netsmart  
PsyTech Solutions, Inc.  
Qualifacts Systems

Specialized Health Management, Inc.  
USI Insurance Services  
Victory Human Services  
William James College

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**Daniel Nakamoto**, Executive Director and CEO, Mental Health Association of Greater Lowell  
**Frederick Newton**, President/CEO, Hope House Addiction Services  
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**Frank Sacco**, President/CEO, Community Services Institute  
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# ABH Staff



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**Constance Peters, Vice President for Addiction Services**

**Lydia Conley, Vice President for Mental Health**

**Amanda Gilman, Senior Director of Public Policy & Research**

**Megan Thompson, Director of Children's Behavioral Health & Member Services**

**Stuart Figueroa, Policy and Research Specialist**

**Rosemary Santini, Administrative Assistant**

**Ellen Caliendo, Business Manager**





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