

TAADAS Advocacy Plan

TAADAS recognized several years ago that the Association and its members wanted a better, proactive approach to an organizational advocacy agenda. TAADAS developed a process for a proactive advocacy plan and sought support from the Healing Trust for our Advocacy Goals. The Healing Trust awarded TAADAS a 3-year advocacy grant beginning in January of 2016. The goals of this grant are focused on establishing an infrastructure for advocacy that will enable TAADAS to engage in advocacy long term—far past the term of the grant.

A process within the TAADAS Legislative Committee was established to develop advocacy goals each year. Additionally, the committee established a decision making process to address urgent legislative or policy issues and a calling tree to keep members informed. TAADAS staff will update the calling tree this Fall and appreciates the participation of all our members in the calling tree and the advocacy process.

TAADAS FY 2018 Advocacy Goals

This year the TAADAS' Legislative Committee submitted Advocacy Goals for consideration at the August Membership Meeting and these goals will continue to be reviewed as the legislative session, Tennessee budget and other policy initiatives are announced. Paul Fuchcar, Legislative Committee Chair, presented the goals to the membership. The current plan includes the following key policy or legislative initiatives:

- Increase in state funding for substance use disorder treatment services and recovery housing, which will address the full continuum of care needs of the addictions and recovery community.
- Tennessee Parity Project, to address parity enforcement and ensure review mechanisms are in place to guarantee behavioral health care services are as accessible as physical health care services.
- IMD Caps with Medicaid Block grants, monitor the present residential services that are in place for addictions treatment due to the 1115 Waiver and what will happen to these services if Tennessee transitions to block grant funding for Medicaid.

Various coalitions are forming around these issues and TAADAS is participating in the development of these groups. The Tennessee Parity Project formed to review parity legislation based on the model presented by Parity Track and NAMI. TAADAS, NAMI TN, TN Hospital Association, TAMHO, and Mental Health America of Middle TN are the foundational members of this coalition and the group will engage additional support for the coalition.

TAADAS participates with several groups of collaborative partners monitoring the move to appeal and replace the Affordable Care Act and move to a block grant funding system for Medicaid. TAADAS will update members on how any change to Medicaid funding will alter the delivery of treatment services for the addictions and recovery community.

There will be training on our planned advocacy agenda, which will highlight the details of each goal as well as support talking points. We plan to have this training during the January TAADAS membership meeting and will discuss key legislators to target for each goal.

TAADAS Day on the Hill will be scheduled for a date in February. The 2018 Day on the Hill will feature a Legislative Breakfast. Kathleen Kennedy, Advocacy Director, will coordinate members' appointments, if interested, and network attending members regionally for joint meetings with identified key legislators.