



Testimony to Senate Finance Health & Human Resources Subcommittee  
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## **Health Care Coverage for Uninsured Virginians—Why It's Important for Adults with Mental Health Disorders**

### **Mental health reform has been a critical issue in Virginia since 2007 and remains a high priority today:**

- Examining services and capacity
- Implementing managed care as a way to improve quality and effectiveness
- Addressing adequacy of mental health laws i.e. ECO and TDO

### **Medicaid expansion is inextricably linked to mental health reform. Why?**

- Approx. 28,952 people served by the CSBs are uninsured (25%)
  - o The entire percentage will not be eligible under expansion but most will be
  - o There are many more not being seen through CSBs or other providers
- For the first time, under expansion, there will be a payment source not only for adults with serious mental illness but also for those with more basic mental health needs.
- Having coverage enables this population to get services and supports they need, medications they need, and to keep conditions in check.
  - o Targeted case management
  - o Medication management and psychiatry services
  - o Outpatient therapy
  - o Crisis intervention
  - o Crisis stabilization
  - o Other mental health services
  - o **As well as physical health care treatment**

**Bottom line: uninsured will be eligible for mental health and physical health services and there will be a way to be reimbursed for the services provided.**

If they are insured, they can get the care they need ahead of time and not wait till a crisis.

- Avoids unnecessary hospitalization
- Avoids emergency room visits
- Avoids health problems from escalating into something much more serious

**Coverage = Access to Consistent Care = Avoid Expensive, Fragmented Treatment**