

## **The Governor's Access Plan: Why It's Important for Uninsured Adults with Mental Illness**

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

- Examining adequacy and effectiveness of services
- Examining capacity and workforce in the mental health system
- Implementing managed care as a way to improve quality and effectiveness
- Addressing adequacy of mental health laws

**Health care coverage is inextricably linked to mental health reform.**

- Many uninsured Virginians with mental health disorders go without the care they need
- Having coverage enables people with serious mental illness to get services, supports, and medications they need to keep conditions in check
- Under the Governor's Access Plan, there will be a payment source to provide mental health and medical services for eligible adults with mental illness
- The GAP plan provides limited mental health and medical benefits
- About one-quarter of people served by community services boards are uninsured

**If people with mental illness have coverage, they can get the care they need ahead of time and not wait till a crisis.**

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

A recent study found that there were **3,436** emergency evaluations conducted on adults 18 years and older in **just one month**.

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**35%** did not have health insurance and **42%** were not receiving mental health treatment at the time of the emergency evaluation.