

# APA statement on mental health provisions in federal end-of-year spending package

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In response to Congressional passage of H.R. 2617, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) today issued the following statement:

As families around the nation continue to contend with the adverse impacts of the pandemic, a crisis in child and [adolescent mental health](#), a high rate of suicide, and the opioid epidemic, it is heartening to see Congress forge a bipartisan agreement and invest in policies that are proven to help. The APA is very pleased that several provisions included in the omnibus will promote access to critically needed care for people with [mental health disorders](#) and substance use disorders (SUDs) and save lives. We commend the authors of those provisions for their focus on [mental health](#) and SUD care—an effort that provides a strong base on which to build in the next Congress.

At the same time, APA is concerned about the harm that will come from Congress' restoring only 2.5% of a 4.5% Medicare payment cut for all physicians beginning Jan. 1. This runs counter to the need to improve access to care for patients and we urge Congress to revisit this continuing challenge as soon as possible in the new year.

H.R. 2617 incorporates several APA-backed measures, including:

- Workforce Equity Investments: Makes crucial investments in our behavioral health care workforce by adding 100 new graduate [medical education](#) (GME) slots specifically for psychiatry or psychiatry subspecialties.
- Collaborative Care Model: Provides grants and technical assistance to primary care practices to implement the evidence-based Collaborative Care Model into their practices for early intervention and prevention of mental health and SUDs.
- Telehealth: Extends the current public health emergency Medicare telehealth flexibilities and delays the implementation of the in-person requirement for telehealth services for mental health until Dec. 31, 2024.
- Health Equity: Provides increased authorization and funding for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's

(SAMHSA) Minority Fellowship Program and programs to improve maternal health.

- **Mental Health/SUD Funding:** Significantly increases funding for critical mental health and SUD programs under SAMHSA, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health, including the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities.
- **Parity Compliance:** Eliminates the parity opt-out for non-federal governmental health plans and provides funding for state insurance departments to enforce and ensure compliance with the mental health parity law.

APA stands ready to work with the next Congress to implement these provisions and continue advancing legislation vital to our country's mental health.

Provided by American Psychiatric Association

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