



# Hill & Back Home Day

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**MIHA**  
Mental Health America  
**B4Stage4**



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead (1901-1978)

**Back Home**

**Hill Day**

**Calls to the  
Capitol**

# Advocacy

- 1. Connect**
- 2. Tell a story**
- 3. Points Against**
- 4. Points in Favor**
- 5. Ask**

# Scheduling a Meeting

1. Zip code lookup:

Representatives [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

Senators [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

2. Visit the Members' official website and obtain:

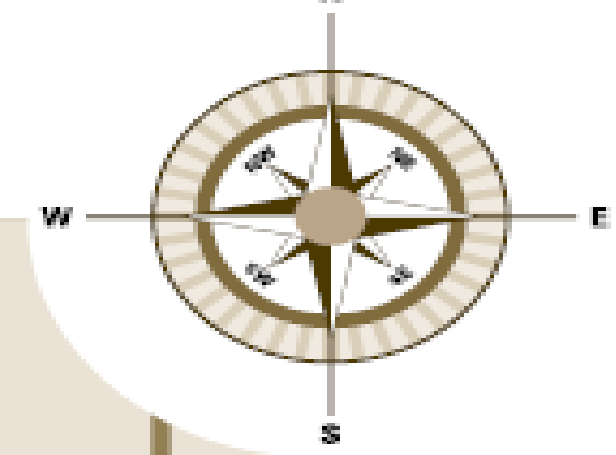
- Washington DC and/or District Office phone numbers
- Office address at the Capitol and Back Home in district

3. Call and inquire “the name of the scheduler and the best manner to submit a scheduling request as a constituent.”

# Scheduling (For Hill Day)

- Submit a scheduling request in writing via email or via an online form (some offices require form).
- Follow up with the scheduler in writing and via telephone *by June 9<sup>th</sup>* at the latest.
- Multiple meetings should be scheduled at LEAST ½ hours apart – the Senate chamber is a 20-minute walk from the House chamber plus security wait times may be long.
  - Schedulers will understand if you tell them you need to move an offered time by ½ hour due to a confirmed meeting on the other side of the Capitol.

# U.S. CAPITOL COMPLEX



 Black arrow indicates rally demonstration "area 10"

- 1 Russell Senate Office Building
- 2 Dirksen Senate Office Building
- 3 Hart Senate Office Building

- 7 Cannon House Office Building
- 8 Longworth House Office Building
- 9 Rayburn House Office Building

# Template Scheduling Email



## TEMPLATE EMAIL

Dear [name of scheduler],

I am a constituent of [Title, Name]. I am writing today to request your assistance scheduling a meeting with the [Representative or Senator].

Each year advocates affiliated with Mental Health America engage with Congress to share our priorities during "Hill Day – this year that day falls on Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup>. Will [Title, Name] have 15-20 minutes to meet with me on June 13<sup>th</sup> after 9:00 am to discuss mental health and health care reform?

I look forward to hearing from you and greatly appreciate your assistance!

Sincerely,

Full Name

Address

Phone

Email

\*Remember to say please and thank you!\*





# Calling your elected official

*Using the zip code lookup tool at [www.house.gov/](http://www.house.gov/) or [www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov/) an advocate may find their Representative and Senator.*

*Staff: Hello, thank you for calling the office of Senator/Representative X*

*MHA Advocate: Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a constituent. I would like to share a message about the importance of protecting mental health care policies and programs.*

*Staff: Sure; I'd be happy to take a message for you and share it with the Representative/Senator.*

*MHA Advocate: Thank you. Again, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am from City, State. [In a couple sentences share a personal story about you, your practice, or a loved one. In one minutes or less explain how proposals being considered to replace Obamacare and cut federal funding for Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance will be harmful.]*

*End the call by thanking the staff for their time and let them know you'd like a response.*



Caren Howard,  
MHA Advocacy  
Manager and  
former  
Congressional  
staff



# In A Meeting

- Thank the Member or staff for taking a vote or action you appreciate.
- Introduce yourself and anyone else with you.
- Share a quip about the state or provide news on a state issue.
- Focus on your talking points. It is important to stay on message: be concrete and concise.
- Tell your personal story.
- Thank the office at the end of the meeting verbally and send a follow up thank you note after visiting.

# Telling Your Story

1. Keep the story to a couple of sentences
2. Think about mental health (MH) services in Medicaid or as part of the exchanges/commercial markets
3. Explain a time when you or someone you know personally benefitted from MH services
4. End the story with an “ask”

# What is an “ask”?

Asks are concrete measurable actions that may be taken by a Member of Congress to change or reinforce existing law.

What ask would benefit you & those you care about?

Please **VOTE NO** on legislation that would **remove MH/SUD** services from the required “essential health benefits” package.

Will you commit to **not cutting Medicaid funding** so MH costs won't be shifted to states?

Can you promise to ensure people with **pre-existing conditions** will not be **excluded** from or **priced out** of coverage in any new health care bill?



# Health Care Reform Priorities

MHA opposes going back to the Bad Old Days:

- Not allowing people with **preexisting conditions** to be **excluded or priced out** of insurance plans
- Prohibiting states from allowing **the sale of plans** that don't designate benefits for MH/SUD as **essential** benefits
- Pricing older, sick and disabled people out of insurance markets by **eliminating community rating**
- **Penalizing people who lose their coverage** with a **30% surcharge** when they try to buy new insurance

# Health Care Reform Priorities

MHA favors:

- Assuring that MH/SUD services remain **Essential Health Benefits**
- Protecting **parity** in all plans including: no higher copays, more stringent approval processes, or more limitations than for any other covered benefits
- Protecting **Medicaid funding** (the nation's largest source of MH/SUD services) so that states aren't forced **to limit services, and cut enrollment**

# Talking Points

## Budget/Appropriations

Fully fund mental health and substance use programs across all federal departments including:

- The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures Act
- Community Mental Health Services Block Grant



# Talking Points

## Medicaid

- Medicaid is the single largest payer for mental health and substance use disorder services.
- Medicaid cuts will shift costs to states forcing people out of the program and reducing services such as prevention and rehabilitation.
- Don't force states to roll back expansion
- Allow new states to expand

# Additional Talking Points

## CHIP

- Reauthorize a long-term funding extension for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) which supports the behavioral health needs and overall health of children.
- Provide certainty to states while they plan their budgets as existing funding will expire September 30

# Additional Resources to Dive Deeper



# Medicaid Breakdown by State

**“20 Percent of Americans Were Covered By Medicaid/CHIP in 2015”**

**Kaiser Family Foundation Fact Sheets By State**

<http://kff.org/interactive/medicaid-state-fact-sheets/>



# MHA Program



THE STATE OF  
MENTAL  
HEALTH  
IN AMERICA  
2017





### 1 IN 5 ADULTS HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION



THAT'S  
**OVER 40 MILLION**  
AMERICANS



MORE THAN  
THE POPULATIONS  
OF NEW YORK & FLORIDA  
**COMBINED**



### YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH IS WORSENING

#### RATES OF YOUTH DEPRESSION

**8.5%**  **11.1%**  
IN 2011 IN 2014

EVEN WITH SEVERE DEPRESSION,  
**80% ARE LEFT WITH NO  
OR INSUFFICIENT TREATMENT.**

### MORE AMERICANS HAVE ACCESS TO SERVICES



ACCESS TO INSURANCE  
INCREASED



SO DID  
ACCESS TO TREATMENT

Healthcare reform has reduced  
the **rates of uninsured adults**  
with mental health conditions;  
**HOWEVER,**



**19%**

REMAINED UNINSURED  
IN STATES THAT  
**DID NOT**  
EXPAND MEDICAID.



**13%**

REMAINED UNINSURED  
IN STATES THAT  
**DID**  
EXPAND MEDICAID.

### MOST AMERICANS LACK ACCESS TO CARE



**56%**

of American adults  
with a mental illness  
**DID NOT**  
receive treatment



Even in Vermont,  
the state with the best access

**43%**

of adults with a mental illness  
**did not** receive treatment.



### THERE IS A SERIOUS MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

In states with the lowest workforce, there's only

**1 mental health professional**  
**per 1,000 individuals**



This includes psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers,  
counselors and psychiatric nurses **COMBINED.**

### LESS ACCESS TO CARE MEANS MORE INCARCERATION

**Arkansas, Mississippi, and Alabama**



had the **least** access to care  
and **highest** rates of imprisonment

There are over **57,000 people** with mental health conditions  
in prison and jail in those states alone  
**that's enough to fill Madison Square Garden**



**3**  
**times**

# Hill/Home Day June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017

## On the Hill:

- Advocates *meet* in Lobby, walk with AFSP to Capitol
- Advocates *rally* with legislative leaders
- Advocates *visit* the office of their Representative and Senators

## Back Home:

- Advocates *view* rally at AFSP website
- Advocates *call* into their Representative and Senators offices
- Advocates **share** the personal nature of mental health reform with the Member's staff



# Questions & Comments

# Thank You & Contact Us



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📘 Facebook.com/mentalhealthamerica

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