

To all NAMI Broward Members:

How to Make New Housing & Hospitals Available for Mentally Ill

Great news:

The federal government just made it easier for your state to expand housing and hospitalization **options** for the seriously mentally ill. The new policy allows states to use Medicaid money to pay for some hospitalization and housing that was previously prohibited.

However, in order to use Medicaid to expand housing and hospitals in your state, the state Medicaid Director has to apply for a waiver.

Below is a form letter we *urge* you to edit and send to our Florida Medicaid Director requesting she apply for a waiver. Please include a brief personal story, especially if you have experience not being able to get a residential treatment bed for your loved one or for yourself.

To: Mary Mayhew, Deputy Secretary for Florida Medicaid

From: <Insert your complete name, address, phone, and email>

Date: <Insert Date>

Subject: **Please Apply for Waiver to use Medicaid funds for IMDs**

As the <mother/father/brother, etc.> of someone with serious mental illness, I am writing to urge you to apply for a Medicaid waiver that would entitle our state to use Medicaid funds for housing and hospitalization for persons with serious mental illness. HHS Sec. Azar announced the availability of waivers to Medicaid's Institutes for Mental Disease (IMD) Exclusion on 11/13/19 and the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) published formal guidance in letter SMD # 18-011 which is available at <https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/smd18011.pdf>

By accessing federal Medicaid funds, our state can lower the state cost of hospitalization and ensure that more seriously mentally ill who need access to hospitalization and housing receive it. This will help lower rates of homelessness, arrest, incarceration and suicide among people with serious mental illness.

Thank you for your attention to this.

<Sign Your Name>

<Insert your complete contact info>

Mail your letter to:

**Mary Mayhew
Deputy Secretary for Medicaid
Florida Agency for Health Care Administration
2727 Mahan Drive, Mail Stop 8
Tallahassee, FL 32308**

(Phone: (850) 412-4006)

**For more information,
see: <https://www.treatmentadvocacycenter.org/what-you-can-do/end-imd-exclusion>**

THANKS for all you do to improve the lives of those with mental illness and their families.
