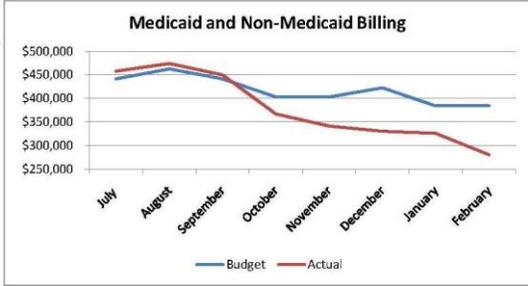


State Mental Health Cuts: A Crisis in the Making

Community providers have endured successive years of budget reductions, extensive payment delays and increasing bureaucratic demands from the State of Illinois. These years of reduction or stagnation cost real money to the tax payer and has been devastating to our most vulnerable members of our community. In particular, there has been a wholesale decimation of community mental health services in the last several years.



- As the result of the FY11 state of Illinois cuts to mental health, MHCCI **experienced a reduction of more than \$1 million or a 15% reduction in state funding** - on top of existing inadequate funding since community mental health providers have not received an increase in rates in over 10 years. Medical services are woefully underfunded, for example, with a reimbursement rate of around \$88 an hour for physician services at a real cost of \$220.

- As the result of the FY 12 state of Illinois cuts to mental health, MHCCI **experienced an additional \$300,000 loss**. Some of the MHCCI programs affected by a 25 percent reduction in their grant funding include Psychiatric Medical Services, Mental Health Juvenile Justice, Psychiatric Medications, and Access (Crisis) Services.

- The current plan of DMH to convert all state-owned, long-term psychiatric beds to forensic beds despite Illinois being in a severe psychiatric bed shortage will make our communities less safe as there will be no place to treat and house individuals who because of their mental illness pose a significant threat to themselves and their community. There is currently no plan to move any money into the community even though there was a commitment and law passed that required the state of Illinois to put funding into a community when state psychiatric beds are closed.

Impact of Budget Cuts on Community Services Provided by Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois

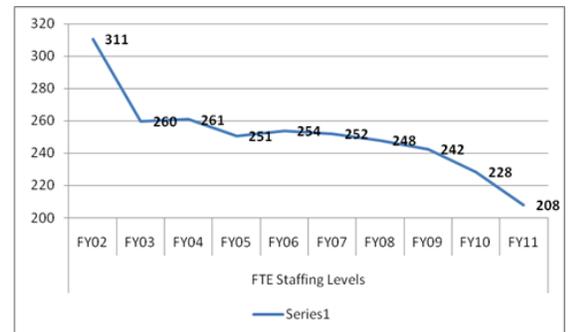
The cuts to community programs are not merely appropriations lines on paper. These cuts have real world consequences on the people served, their family members, and the staff working in community agencies throughout Illinois.

Impact on community services at MHCCI for individuals with mental illness as a result of state budget cuts

- 17 percent reduction in the number of people that we served in a six-county region - **more than 1,500 people** - since July 2010!
- 37 percent - **3,000 individuals** – on average will have limited or no access to mental health services due to no insurance coverage.
- See a real life story of the potential impact of the proposed state budget cuts on the back page.

Impact on local economy in central Illinois

- **10 percent fewer employees at MHCCI in FY11 - 30 people, 30 fewer full-time jobs in our communities over the past year.** This follows a dramatic downward trend during the past few years as a direct result of budget reductions by the state of Illinois.
- Rather than saving money for the state and local communities, these cuts to services simply shift financial responsibility to emergency departments, community hospitals, jails, nursing homes, and homeless shelters.



We ask YOU, to protect community services for over 200,000 individuals with mental illness in Illinois by:

- Preserving current funding for community services,
- Enforcing timely and consistent payment cycles, and
- Reducing bureaucracy and implementing parity in community mental health.



Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois is a private, not-for-profit organization providing high-quality, comprehensive behavioral health and rehabilitation services. An affiliate of Memorial Health System, Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois is one of the largest providers of behavioral health services in central Illinois, serving more than 9,000 individuals each year in Logan, Mason, Menard, Morgan, Sangamon and Scott counties. Established in 1947, MHCCI has more than 62 years of experience caring for children, adolescents, and adults and today has six sites of care located in Springfield, Lincoln, and Jacksonville.

Janice Gambach is president of Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois and system administrator for behavioral health for Memorial Health System. You may contact Jan at (217) 588-7807 or gambach.jan@mhsil.com. For more information about Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois, go to MHCCI.org.

Impact of State of Illinois FY12 Budget Cuts on People Served by Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois

A Real Life Story

Nick is a 40-year-old man who came to the **Medical Services Program at MHCCI** with psychotic symptoms including paranoia and delusions as well as a substance abuse problem in 2006. He was homeless, had no money, few possessions, and no family in the area. Nick was first treated in 1988 for bipolar disorder and had six hospitalizations, mostly for uncontrollable manic symptoms and legal problems. In previous years his symptoms had stabilized, and he had worked as a teacher in southern Illinois. Nick struggled to pay for his medications – he had a steady salary but it barely covered his bills. His job provided no health insurance and he did not qualify for Medicaid. Nick had to choose between paying his rent or his medication – so he stopped taking his medication. It was not long before his symptoms returned and he became paranoid with delusions. As a result, he abruptly terminated his job and fled the area, moving to Springfield without any possessions.

Nick was seen at MHCCI in Springfield as a patient even though he had no medical card, no private insurance and no money to pay for services. Following rapid assessment, intensive follow-up treatment and support in the Medical Services Program and other programs at MHCCI, Nick's symptoms subsided. He found stable housing, started working again and is a contributing member of the Springfield community. Currently, Nick is working full-time as a substitute teacher in an area school district, paying his bills, and maintaining his own apartment. He is still in treatment, but is stable and continues to make great strides in his progress. Nick feels like he "belongs" somewhere for the first time in a long time. Nick attributes his success in maintaining his current level of wellness and health to the care he received at Mental Health Centers of Central Illinois.

State Budget Impact: The FY11 state budget eliminated payment for virtually all services to mentally ill individuals who do not have Medicaid coverage, except for brief crisis intervention and limited follow-up services. Nick would not have had the services needed to get back on his feet. The FY12 budget further cut payment for mental health grants by 25 percent or more including a grant that funds medications and psychiatric services for those individuals who have no funding. The threatened closure of the 82 beds at Andrew McFarland Mental Health Center in Springfield will further stress our broken system of care for persons with mental illnesses in our community.

Thousands of "Nick's" full of hope and possibility will languish in nursing homes, jails, and the streets; they will bounce in and out of emergency departments and hospitals because of lack of access to appropriate community care. They will put others at risk because of their untreated mental illness. Nick would have stood little chance of regaining his health and becoming a productive citizen in central Illinois without access to community services. With the lack of community funding, Illinois is in danger of more costs, risks, and lawsuits. Most importantly, people like Nick will not receive the assistance they so desperately need treat the very real illness of mental illness. With support and a little bit of help, individuals with mental illness do get better with treatment. Support of community services keeps the doors of local non-profit businesses open, feeds the local economy, costs less than state services, and supports the right of our most vulnerable citizens to live and contribute to their communities.



Nick is grateful for the services that he continues to receive. By sharing his story, we hope to help the policymakers see the impact of their decisions. We believe in the power of recovery and want Illinois to put their funding behind their vision.

A MHCCI client and care manager work together at a local farm as part of rehabilitation and recovery.