

Northeast Business Group on Health Selected for Employer-led Effort to Improve Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Care in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Nationally

NEW YORK – December 12, 2019 – Northeast Business Group on Health (NEBGH) has been selected to lead efforts in New York, northern New Jersey and southern Connecticut to improve mental health and substance use care. This is part of a transformative initiative called The Path Forward for Mental Health and Substance Use led by the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions, American Psychiatric Association (APA), American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APAF) Center for Workplace Mental Health and Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute.

[Launched last month](#), The Path Forward has embarked on a five-year plan to execute a disciplined, private sector approach to improve mental health and substance use care for Americans across the nation.

“We are very pleased that our organization has been selected to participate in this very important initiative to improve care for mental health and substance abuse disorders,” said Candice Sherman, CEO of NEBGH. “Employers, working in collaboration with health plans, providers and other stakeholders, can play a significant role in improving the access to high-quality, high-value behavioral health care and bringing care for mental health and substance abuse to the same level of care afforded to physical medical care.”

NEBGH will lead one of eight Regional Employer Stakeholder Engagement Teams (RESET Regions) to leverage the influence of their employer and other health care purchaser members to work with health plans, medical and behavioral health groups, consultants and brokers to combat this public health crisis. To gain national traction, similar efforts are underway in California, District of Columbia, Florida, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.

“The mental health and substance use system across the country is in crisis,” said Michael Thompson, National Alliance President and CEO. “The activities of the RESET Regions will be key to achieving and leveraging sustainable and measurable improvements to access, comprehensive care and parity. These employers are the primary financiers of the system and they will both set the tone and hold the stakeholders accountable for accomplishing these goals.”

A [report published last month](#) by Milliman found the current state of mental health and substance use treatment in America is dire and only getting worse. Results showed that patients were much more likely to resort to “out-of-network” providers for behavioral health treatment than for other conditions.

To overcome these issues, The Path Forward has identified Five Priority Strategies that constitute our nation’s best opportunity to transform behavioral healthcare at a population level and improve access to necessary early detection and appropriate treatment. These best practices include (1) improving access to “in-network” behavioral health specialists, (2) expanding use of the collaborative care model to integrate behavioral health into primary care, (3) implementing measurement-based care in both primary care and behavioral specialty care to improve quality and outcomes, (4) expanding tele-behavioral health, and (5) ensuring mental health parity compliance.

The RESET Regions are already moving forward with coordinating their employer members and local stakeholders. [Learn more about The Path Forward for Mental Health and Substance Use here.](#)

About American Psychiatric Association

The American Psychiatric Association (APA), founded in 1844, is the oldest medical association in the country. The APA is also the largest psychiatric association in the world with more than 38,500 physician members specializing in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses. APA's vision is to ensure access to quality psychiatric diagnosis and treatment. For more information visit psychiatry.org.

About American Psychiatric Association Foundation Center for Workplace Mental Health

The American Psychiatric Association Foundation, a subsidiary of the APA, works to create a mentally healthy nation by advancing mental health, overcoming mental illness and eliminating stigma. The Center for Workplace Mental Health helps employers create a more supportive workplace for their employees and advance mental health at their organizations. For more information, visit workplacementalhealth.org.

About Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute

Since its public launch in 2014, Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI) has helped Texas legislators, government officials, members of the judiciary, and local leaders identify systemic mental health needs and solutions, quickly becoming Texas's most trusted source for data-driven mental health policy. MMHPI is helping Texas leaders address the mental health crisis in our jails and emergency rooms, improve access to care for veterans and their families, shift the focus of new investments toward early intervention, and expand the mental health workforce. Learn more about MMHPI at texasstateofmind.org.

About National Alliance

The National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions is the only nonprofit, purchaser-led organization with a national and regional structure dedicated to driving health and healthcare value across the country. Our members represent more than 12,000 employers/purchasers and 45 million Americans spending over \$300 billion annually on healthcare. To learn more, visit nationalalliancehealth.org, connect with us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About Northeast Business Group on Health

NEBGH is an employer-led, multi-stakeholder coalition that empowers members to drive excellence in health and achieve the highest value in healthcare delivery and the consumer experience. NEBGH employer/purchaser members cover 6 million lives in the U.S. and 10 million globally.

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