

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAPHS White Paper Offers Recommendations for Responding to the Newtown Tragedy

(Washington, DC, March 12, 2013)....At its Annual Meeting today, the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS) released a new white paper offering the association's recommendations on [*Responding to the Newtown Tragedy*](#).

In January 2013, President Obama laid out an action plan in the aftermath of the tragic shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, CT, on December 14, 2012. One key element of that plan was a call for a "national dialogue on mental health." As an association representing behavioral healthcare provider organizations and professionals, NAPHS developed the white paper to "focus on the issues that we understand best -- those affecting Americans of all ages who face serious and life-threatening mental and addictive disorders," said NAPHS President/CEO Mark Covall in releasing the document. "The NAPHS white paper presents an analysis of what we know about behavioral health, about treatment of these disorders, and about current barriers to necessary treatment. It includes extensive references and data along with specific recommendations for action."

In the white paper, NAPHS notes that any policy actions "need to have broad impact, be feasible to accomplish, and be cost-effective." Specifically, NAPHS recommends a focus on four priority areas:

- 1) ensuring **coverage** for mental and addictive disorders at parity with coverage for other medical conditions;
- 2) **access** to all levels of behavioral health care (inpatient—intermediate—outpatient) so that all Americans can get the right help, at the right time, in the right setting;
- 3) **adequate resources** to fund gaps in community services; and
- 4) **predictability and consistency of funding** for the treatment continuum, with accountability for quality.

NAPHS and its member organizations will use the document throughout 2013 to help educate Congress, the administration, local communities, and other constituencies as they come together in a year of "national dialogue."

NAPHS advocates for behavioral health and represents provider systems that are committed to the delivery of responsive, accountable, and clinically effective prevention, treatment, and care for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults with mental and substance use disorders. Its members are behavioral healthcare provider organizations that own or manage more than 700 specialty psychiatric hospitals, general hospital psychiatric and addiction treatment units and behavioral healthcare divisions, residential treatment facilities, youth services organizations, and extensive outpatient networks. Founded in 1933, the association is headquartered in Washington, DC.

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