

# **MENTAL HEALTH REFORM:** **THE MISSING LINK IS HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

**To successfully reform Virginia's mental health system, we must ensure that its clients have health care coverage.**

- An estimated 77,000 uninsured adult Virginians suffer from mental illness<sup>1</sup>. About 40,000 of them have a serious illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder<sup>2</sup>.
- Many uninsured Virginians with mental health disorders go without the care they need.

**Lawmakers have an opportunity to provide health insurance to low-income adults and make Virginia a leader in mental health care.**

- The proposed Marketplace Virginia plan would infuse \$1.2 billion of much-needed new resources for Virginia's community mental health services between FY15 and FY22<sup>3</sup>.
- It will also infuse \$426 million in the same years for traditional psychiatric services such as outpatient appointments, prescriptions and inpatient hospitalization<sup>4</sup>.
- About 22,000 adults served by the Community Services Boards\* are uninsured. It's important to remember that thousands more with mental health disorders are not receiving care.

**People with coverage can get regular mental health care and medications, which help them stay healthy and avoid crisis. Preventing crisis situations can save money for taxpayers.**

- Hospitalizations and emergency treatment options can traumatize patients and cost taxpayers a lot of money.
- Reducing crisis situations lessens the burden on the hospital and criminal justice systems.

## BY THE NUMBERS

# 14%

of the nation's 7 million mental health ED visits are made by uninsured patients.<sup>5</sup>

# 77,000

**UNINSURED ADULTS HAVE MENTAL ILLNESS IN VIRGINIA.**

# 6 IN 10 ADULTS

living with mental illness went without health care in the past year, largely because they don't have insurance.<sup>6</sup>



\*Virginia's Community Services Boards are the point of entry into the publicly funded system of services for mental health, intellectual disability and substance abuse.

<sup>1</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.) Enrollment under the Medicaid Expansion and Health Insurance Exchanges. A Focus on Those with Behavioral Health Conditions in each State. <http://www.samhsa.gov/healthreform/enrollment.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (n.d.) Enrollment under the Medicaid Expansion and Health Insurance Exchanges. A Focus on Those with Behavioral Health Conditions in each State. <http://www.samhsa.gov/healthreform/enrollment.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association Fact Sheet; Estimated Fiscal Impact, Department of Medical Assistance Services, January 22, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association Fact Sheet; PwC, Covering the Uninsured PMPM Estimates, January 29, 2014, prepared for Department of Medical Assistance Services

<sup>5</sup> Pamela L. Owens, Ph.D., et al, July 2010. "Mental Health and Substance Abuse-Related Emergency Department Visits among Adults," Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

<sup>6</sup> Medicaid Expansion and Mental Health Care, National Alliance on Mental Illness, May 2013