



## Governor Baker's H1 Budget

### ABH March Committee Meetings

Monday, March 8  
**Billing**, 10 a.m.

Friday, March 12  
**Children's Services**,  
10 a.m.

Thursday, March 16  
**OTP**, 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 17  
**Quality & Outcomes**,  
10 a.m.

Thursday, March 18  
**BH CP Exec.**, 10 a.m.  
**HR**, 10 a.m.  
**RRS/TSS**, 10 a.m.

Friday, March 19  
**MIDP/SOA**, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 23  
**PWUP**, 12 p.m.

Friday, March 26  
**CBHI**, 10 a.m.

On January 27, 2021, Governor Baker released his [Fiscal Year \(FY\) 2022 Budget](#) proposal (referred to as House I or H1). House I amounts to \$45.6 billion, constituting a 0.7% decrease over projected final FY21 spending. The bill relies on utilizing \$1.6B from the Stabilization Fund (aka 'The Rainy Day Fund'), leaving \$1.1B available for future use. Please see ABH's [Analysis of the FY22 Governor's House I Budget](#) for details. The FY22 House I proposed budget includes the following highlights:

- The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is funded at \$943.7M. The Adult Community Services line item (5046-0000) is funded at \$504.9M, an increase of \$3.4M over projected FY21 spending. The Children's Services line item (5042-5000) is funded at \$97.13M, which is approximately \$2.67M over projected FY21 spending. Consistent with FY21 GAA, the DCHD Rental Subsidies for DMH Clients is funded at \$10.55M.
- House I recommends that BSAS be funded at \$155M. This represents a decrease of \$27.4M from projected FY21 spending. ABH understands this decrease is largely the result of the reduction in programmatic earmarks for Massachusetts Access to Recovery (MA-ATR) and opting not to annualize funding for recovery centers.
- House I funds MassHealth at \$17.59B. This represents a 3.4% gross (7.2% net) decrease from projected final FY21 spending. House I includes \$84M to support ambulatory behavioral health services; however detailed language was not included within the budget.
- The DCF Children and Families Services line item (4800-0038) is funded at \$299.6M, approximately \$8.2M less than projected FY21 spending. The Congregate Care account (4800-0041) is funded at \$307.7M, an increase of more than \$9.7M over projected FY21 spending.
- The Chapter 257 rate reserve (1599-6903) is funded at \$79M. This funding is for rates to be adjusted in the upcoming year.

The bill also includes outside sections allowing EOHHS to expend additional funds (\$20M) from the Substance Use Disorder Trust Fund in FY22. These funds are designated to support the expand and support the residential treatment system to treat individuals with a substance use disorder or co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder; expand and support access to medication assisted treatment (MAT); and implement and support American Society of Addiction Medicine assessment and care planning across substance use treatment providers.

ABH continues to assess the Governor's budget recommendations and will report more information as it becomes available.

# CCBHC Grant Opportunity

SAMHSA has announced that applications for [FY21 CCBHC grants](#) are now being accepted. The grants are available to community treatment providers in every state.

Qualified applicants must be a CCBHC or be able to meet the requirements of a CCBHC within four months of receiving a grant. Applicants must be either a nonprofit or local government behavioral health authority. CCBHC Expansion grant recipients that received funding under CCBHCs Expansion FOA (SM-20-012, with funding announcements made in 2020) are not eligible to apply for funding under this FOA.

The National Council will be hosting a Q&A session with details to be announced soon, but in advance of that meeting, here are a few items of interest:

- SAMHSA is accepting 74 applications, meaning that competition will be strong.
- The amount of the grants will be \$2 million per year for 2 years.
- Applications are due March 1.

Please feel free to reach out to [CCBHC@thenationalcouncil.org](mailto:CCBHC@thenationalcouncil.org) with any questions, ideas, or comments.

## COVID Vaccination Sites

As of January 21, 2021, all individuals in Phase 1 became eligible for vaccinations, and Phase 2 began on February 1, 2021 for residents 75 years and older. The COVID-19 website continues to be updated with new vaccination sites added to the map, open to all currently eligible populations in the state. The new sites provide additional geographic coverage as well as additional settings (pharmacy access in addition to hospital / clinical settings).

The map now includes:

- Red star: Mass Vaccination Sites are high throughout, large venue sites
- Green star: General Vaccination Sites
- Purple star: General Vaccination Sites (Pharmacies)

Please note that all sites require appointments.

## Action Alert: Congressional Mental Health Access Improvement Act

On January 21, Representative Mike Thompson (D-CA) reintroduced the Mental Health Access Improvement Act (H.R. 432). This legislation, a National Council priority bill, would allow marriage and family therapists and licensed mental health counselors to directly bill Medicare for their services, dramatically expanding access to care for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

As you may know, these professionals currently are not eligible Medicare providers, despite the important role they play in delivering treatment, recovery, and prevention services to seniors and people with disabilities. This simple change would immediately increase patients' access to needed care, particularly in underserved communities, rural areas, and areas with a mental health workforce shortage.

To advocate on behalf of this bill, you can ask your Congressional Representative to cosponsor the Mental Health Access Improvement Act by navigating to the National Council's [Policy Action Center](#).

# ABH COVID-19 Landing Page

ABH has created a COVID-19 resource page where we are collecting the guidance most relevant to ABH members:

<https://www.abhmass.org/newsroom/announcements/guidance-on-covid-19.html>

## Biden Retracts Trumps “Divisive” Diversity Order

President Joe Biden signed an executive order on his first day in office that rolls back President Trump’s executive order that banned federal agencies, contractors and recipients of federal grants from providing any kind of “divisive” diversity training for employees. Under the executive order, any training that might be considered “divisive, anti-American propaganda” was prohibited. While the executive order had been blocked by a federal judge in September, President Biden’s executive order eliminates the ban.

Also signed by President Biden on January 20 was an order directing federal agencies to ensure that any policies and regulations prohibiting sex discrimination also include sexual orientation and gender identity.

## Budget Next Steps

Now that Governor Baker has filed his budget for Fiscal Year 2022, what happens next?

The legislation is now before the House of Representatives.



The House Ways & Means Committee will hold a budget hearing in late winter or early spring, likely in conjunction with the Senate Committee on Ways & Means. In April, the House Ways & Means Committee will release its own budget proposal, which will be debated, amended, and voted upon by the full House. The Senate will then follow in May.

After each chamber has approved its version of the budget, the Senate President and House Speaker will make appointments to a conference committee to resolve differences between the House and Senate spending bills and produce a final legislative budget known as a conference committee report. The conference committee report will be voted either up or down (no amendments are permitted) by each chamber, and if approved, sent to the Governor who will have ten days to review the budget and return his vetoes and recommendations for amendment.

## ICS RFR Amendments

The Department of Mental Health has posted amendments and restatements to its Intensive Community Services (ICS) RFR docs based on feedback and questions. The Department also posted a document with questions and answers. All documents can be found here:

<https://www.commbuys.com/bs0/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-21-1022-DMH08-8220A-57427&external=true&entUrl=close>

# RFR Issued for Behavioral Health for Justice Involved Individuals (BH-JI)

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services has issued an RFR for Behavioral Health for Justice Involved Individuals (BH-JI) Supports to Eligible Individuals. The goals for the program include specific goals for the BH-JI program include:

- Establishing a sustainable model for engaging Justice-Involved Individuals with mental health and Substance Use Disorder needs;
- Improving health outcomes, decreasing fatal overdoses, and supporting effective, efficient healthcare utilization for Justice-Involved Individuals Enrolled in the BH-JI program; and
- Connecting and transitioning eligible Enrolled Individuals to appropriate health care services and Community Services,

Additional information is available here: <https://www.commbuys.com/bsso/external/bidDetail.sdo?docId=BD-21-1039-EHS01-EHS02-57424&external=true&parentUrl=close>.

## 21st Century Cures Act Implementation: Impact on Behavioral Healthcare Organizations

In December 2019, the U.S. Congress passed the 21st Century Cures Act. The 21st Century Cures Act contains numerous sections that impact health IT and behavioral healthcare providers. The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a final rule to implement the law. The rule provides implementation parameters for certain provisions of the 21st Century Cures Act, including:

- Conditions and Maintenance of Certification requirements for health information technology (health IT) developers under the ONC Health IT Certification Program (Program);
- the voluntary certification of health IT for use by pediatric health care providers; and,
- reasonable and necessary activities that do not constitute information blocking.

You can see the linked memo [here](#) outlining Cures Act changes and action steps ABH members might be consider as they prepare for implementation.

Please note, the linked memo above is only available to ABH Members through our Members-Only Portal.

You must be logged in to your account in order to access the Cures Act information. If you have any issues accessing your account, please contact Meg Socha, Member Engagement and Event Coordinator, at [msocha@abhmass.org](mailto:msocha@abhmass.org).

## ABH Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report

We are pleased to share with you the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Annual Report for the Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. and the Association for Behavioral Healthcare Foundation, Inc. The following FY 2020 Annual Report highlights our successes as an organization in FY 2020, including our member trainings, state and federal policy advocacy, and our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. You can access ABH's FY 2020 Annual Report [here](#).

## ABH STAFF

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# Commonwealth Medicine Webinar - Applying Infection Control in Congregate Care Settings

On Tuesday, January 26, 2021, Commonwealth Medicine, in coordination with EOHHS, DPH and partner agencies, have offered an infection control webinar for program and state staff to prevent and control the spread of COVID-19 in congregate care settings.

This webinar was led by a Certified Infection Control Preventionist, and was an opportunity for site/house managers, direct care staff and other individuals to use webinar materials to provide additional infection control training and education to program staff and residents.

Webinar discussion covered the Basics of Infection Control, including how and when to apply proper infection control practices in congregate care programs. They also answered questions from those who joined the webinar live.

The webinar was recorded and has been made available for future viewing and staff training. To access the recording, slide deck PDF, webinar transcript, and other congregate care infection control resources, click [here](#).

## BSAS Final Ambulatory/Outpatient Rates Posted for 101 CMR 346

The BSAS Final Ambulatory/Outpatient Rates in 101 CMR 346.00: Rates for Certain Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders Programs have been posted and the regulation is available [here](#).

An analysis of these final rates, including the percent increase for each rate, is available [here](#).

## Interesting Reads

- [‘Peer Respite’ Provide an Alternative to Psychiatric Wards During Pandemic.](#) *Kaiser Health News.*
- [Experts Express Concerns Over Mental Health Of Some Kids In The Pandemic.](#) *NPR.*
- [Biden to reopen ACA insurance marketplaces as pandemic has cost millions of Americans their coverage.](#) *The Washington Post*
- [Developing a holistic approach to homelessness.](#) *CommonWealth.*
- [They Lost Sons To Drug Overdoses: How The Pandemic May Be Fueling Deaths Of Despair.](#) *NPR.*