



## **Georgia Association of Community Service Boards 2017 Legislative Agenda and Talking Points**

The following 2017 legislative agenda and associated talking points were approved by the Board of Directors of the Association on December 8, 2016. The Executive Committee or the Board of Directors, on the recommendation of the Public Image and Policy Committee, is authorized to modify this agenda on an emergency basis or as circumstances dictate prior to and during the 2017 session of the General Assembly.

### **1. Amended FY 2016 and FY 2017 Appropriations Acts**

The Association supports DBHDD's Amended FY 2017 and FY 2018 Appropriations requests. For FY 2017, DBHDD has amended their request by \$14,341,119 in additional state funds, which includes \$8,207,843 for new adult developmental disability waivers and \$6,133,276 for supported housing for the adult mental health population. For FY 2018, DBHDD has requested \$53,880,336 in additional state funds, which include \$13,415,686 for new adult developmental disability waivers, \$7,756,876 for supported housing for the adult mental health population, \$1,223,897 to annualize 100 adult developmental disability waivers, \$11,900,000 for a Developmental Disability COMP rate increase, \$10,731,835 for BIPP Restoration, and \$644,199 FMAP Change. Additionally, DBHDD will be requesting \$13,259,409 for an enhancement for hospital clinical employee packages, \$12,000,000 for 2 new Behavioral Health Crisis Centers (BHCC's), and \$20,000,000 to fund the development of DBHDD Core Services.

### **2. Governor's Criminal Justice Re-Entry Initiative**

During the past three years, CSBs, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Community Supervision, as well as DBHDD continue to be engaged in expanding activities to support the re-entry of former inmates with behavioral health challenges into community life. The Association has participated and continues to participate in The State Reentry Task Force of the Governor's Office of Transition, Support, and Reentry, which addresses the needs for successful reentry and recovery. The Association advocates for increased funding for housing, employment, and service delivery should the Governor recommend funding to support the re-entry of former inmates with behavioral health challenges into community life, or increased funding for treatment courts and further, advocates that such services should be integrated into the existing public safety net system of care.

### **3. Governor's Juvenile Justice Reform**

The CSBs, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and DBHDD continue to work to expand activities to support the re-entry of youth with behavioral health challenges into community life. The Association has and continues to participate on The Reentry Task Force of the Department of Juvenile Justice in addition to leading pilot projects across the state addressing protocols for transition and evidence based practices for behavioral health treatment of youth integrating back into community life. The Association supports any increased funding should the Governor recommend appropriations that support the reentry of youth with behavioral health challenges into community life, or increased funding for treatment courts and further, advocates that such services should be integrated with the existing public safety net system of care.



#### **4. Implementation of HB 768 - ABLE Act**

Rep. Lee Hawkins (R-Gainesville), is another version to provide for the establishment of a qualified ABLE program in Georgia. This is the "Georgia Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Act" proposed as a new Chapter 9 in Title 30. It does create the Georgia ABLE Program Corporation to administer this Program. The legislation outlines in O.C.G.A. § 30-9-4 the Corporation's Board's duties and authorities. There is a required "participation agreement" with certain things to be included in O.C.G.A. § 30-9-7 (and it does limit those set forth in Section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code). It further creates in O.C.G.A. § 30-9-8 the Georgia ABLE Program Trust Fund as a separate fund in the State's treasury; Account contributors are permitted to contribute only cash, except as permitted under Section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code. In O.C.G.A. § 30-9-13, the Departments of Community Health, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Agency and Education are to assist, cooperate, and coordinate in the providing of public information and outreach for the ABLE program. It does outline in O.C.G.A. § 30-9-14 what is to occur when a beneficiary dies and permits a claim with the Georgia ABLE Program to be submitted. There is a tax law change at O.C.G.A. § 48-7-27(a)(11.2) so that individuals may obtain an exemption for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2016 up to the contribution but not exceeding \$2,000.00 per beneficiary. The Association would like for the General Assembly to place consideration on appropriating the necessary funding to implement the Georgia ABLE Act as passed during the 2016 Legislative Session.

#### **5. "The Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights"; certain audits conducted by the Department of Community Health; remove exception; provisions (Introduced 2016 as HB 916)**

A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 26-4-118 of the O.C.G.A., relating to "The Pharmacy Audit Bill of Rights;" so as to remove an exception relating to certain audits conducted by the Department of Community Health; to amend Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the O.C.G.A., relating to medical assistance generally, so as to provide that clerical or other errors do not constitute a basis to recoup payments made by providers of medical assistance; to provide for a correction period; to amend Chapter 1 of Title 50 of the O.C.G.A., relating to general provisions regarding state government, so as to provide that clerical or other errors do not constitute a basis to recoup payments made by providers of medical assistance; to provide for a correction period; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

#### **6. Support increased insurance coverage and access to services for Georgians, while considering the uniqueness of the population served through DBHDD and the CSBs**

In response to the Georgia Chamber of Commerce – Health and Wellness Policy Committee's Quality Healthcare Access Study, and recognizing the potential for legislative action to improve access to healthcare services for lower income individuals, the Association supports the efforts of DBHDD to convey the responsibility of the public safety net system to support the improvement of access, while recognizing the absence of the Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) population—who are typically served by the CSBs and other providers within the DBHDD network—from the Georgia Chamber's Report. In addition, the Association would like for the General Assembly to place consideration on the variability in results that Medicaid expansion has yielded in other states, and the Association would recommend a comprehensive look into how the SPMI population can be served with high quality, cost-effective care under the three options that were conveyed by the Georgia Chamber's report.



7. **Support Senate Bill 52 authorizing Licensed Professional Counselor; sunset provision; repeal**

In response to Act No. 546, approved April 21, 2014 (Ga L. 2014, p. 347), relating to mental health and authorizing a licensed professional counselor (LPC) to perform a 1013 on a client, and as amended, particularly by an Act approved March 10, 2015 (Ga. L. 2015, p. 4), Senate Bill 52 aims to repeal Section 2A to authorize LPCs to 1013 a client beyond June 30, 2018.