

What's the issue

- 1115 Waivers are one of the key tools that states use in their role as “laboratories of democracy.”
- These contracts give states the freedom to use their Medicaid dollars in ways that would not normally be allowed under existing Medicaid rules.
- As long as states do not exceed what they would normally spend for their Medicaid program, CMS can provide an 1115 Waiver to allow them to pilot and test initiatives that show promise in improving the way that Medicaid works.
- In 2016, Illinois solicited input from over 2,000 stakeholders in order to create an 1115 Waiver addressing the behavioral health system in the state.
- Currently, the 25 percent of Illinois Medicaid beneficiaries with behavioral health issues account for 56 percent of all Medicaid spending.

Why does it matter?

- Revamping the delivery of behavioral health in Illinois has the potential to create significant savings, while at the same time addressing pressing social problems such as the opioid epidemic.
- The recent budget stalemate in Illinois has had significant impact on community behavioral health providers and the waiver is one way of rebuilding care in the community.
- The waiver would also help alleviate some of the stress on the system due to a shortage of mental health professionals in the state.
- Illinois needs a more coordinated, efficient, outcomes-based behavioral health system that reaches people with the right kind of care, at the right time.
- The waiver is focused on integrating physical and behavioral health, moving care from institutions to community-based settings and supporting the state’s journey to value-based care. Key activities and services funded under the proposed 5-year waiver include:
 - Greater access to supportive services, such as housing, employment and re-entry program for justice-involved individuals
 - Redesign of the substance use disorder service continuum
 - Optimization of mental health service continuum
 - Additional benefits for children and youth with significant mental health needs
 - Workforce development

What is the Presence Health perspective?

- **Presence Health sees first-hand behavioral health needs.** Presence Health is the largest provider of behavioral health services in the state. Our emergency departments have seen an increase in individuals needing behavioral health care as a result of the decreased availability of community mental health services.
- **Physical and mental health care must be coordinated.** Treatment of physical and mental health in one setting is important and the current reimbursement structure does not support care delivery in this way. Medicaid beneficiaries who need mental health services can receive them in a community setting rather than a more costly hospital setting.
- **Workforce development is critical for the future of behavioral health care.** Presence Health supports workforce development initiatives such as loan forgiveness that would address the state's shortage of mental health professionals.
- **Telehealth can effectively meet mental health demands.** We also support increased support for telehealth through the waiver as a means of expanding the capacity of our current mental health providers