



Virginia MIRC< vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov>

New MIRC Comment

1 message

Mon, Oct 7, 2013 at 4:57 PM

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: vamirc@mirc.virginia.gov

First Name - Lori

Last Name - Pickford

Organization Name - Personal Individual

Comment -



10-9-13 Letter on Medicare Reform in VA.pdf.docx

12K

October 9, 2013

Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission (MIRC)
201 North 9th Street
General Assembly Building
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear MIRC Commission,

I am writing to urge the commission to modify Medicaid in Virginia to include mental health coverage. Living in Virginia and working on Washington, DC, we have seen too many incidents where access to medical health care could have helped individual whose actions resulted in terrible tragedies. Numerous studies show that the most mentally ill individuals are not violent, but lack of treatment and services often escalates into crisis, which is more expensive for the health care system, the person and family, and the community.

During the past year alone, six in ten adults experiencing serious mental illness went without mental health care, in large part due to having no insurance. Under Virginia's current strict eligibility, thousands of low-income adults who live with mental illness do not qualify for Medicaid. Expansion will change that.

Virginia already spends millions of dollars through the state General Fund to provide health care for people who are uninsured. Modifying Medicaid in Virginia to include mental health service would be a more cost-effective way of providing coverage and would be a small step in addressing a growing illness that is misunderstood and often ignored. Providing a few, -- those individuals with the most need -- with coverage would be a good first step in targeting those low income individual who live with mental illness to potentially get the services that will make a difference.

As a concerned citizen and someone who supports access to mental health care, I strongly support modifying Medicaid in Virginia, and ask you to do what you can to make it happen.

Sincerely,

Lori J. Pickford
Fairfax, Virginia [REDACTED]