The COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout have had serious negative impacts on mental health.

According to the National Institutes of Health, 1 in 5 people with an addiction saw an increase in their substance use or that of a family member during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Medicaid provides access to treatment for many of the 20 million Americans with an addiction. In 2019, almost 12 percent of Medicaid beneficiaries over age 18 had an addiction.

**OPTIONS FOR STATE ACTION**

**PREVENT ADDICTION BY ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES**

**The Reality**
- The stress and trauma of the last year, coupled with other difficult life experiences, may put children at higher risk of addiction as teens and adults.
- Supporting families of young children can reduce this risk and support lifelong health and wellbeing.

**Innovative Approaches**
- Leverage evidence-based early child development and family support.
- Incentivize providers to deliver trauma-informed care.

**INCREASE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY-BASED CARE**

**The Reality**
- Medicaid programs can improve access to treatment for people struggling with any addiction, including opioid addiction.
- Primary care providers are an important place for Medicaid programs to build capacity and get more members connected to treatment.

**Innovative Approaches**
- Expand medication-assisted treatment.
- Leverage telehealth to increase access to substance use disorder treatment.
- Create e-consult support for primary care providers.
INCREASE ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED INPATIENT SERVICES

The Reality
- Federal law prohibits Medicaid from paying for specialized inpatient services to treat addiction.
- This has made it difficult for Medicaid members to access addiction treatment in an inpatient setting.

Innovative Approach
- Leverage federal authorities (1115 waivers, managed care authority, or a state-plan amendment) to provide specialized inpatient care for those with an addiction.

PROVIDE RECOVERY SUPPORTS

The Reality
- People need more than just clinical care to recover from an addiction.
- Non-clinical supports are equally important so people can stay in recovery and fully participate in their community.

Innovative Approach
- Cover peers and family peer specialists for all members with an addiction.
- Provide other supports, or incent plans to provide supports, to help people stay in recovery.

ABOUT MEDICAID FORWARD

More than 77 million Americans – roughly one in every five – use Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to get the health care they need. With this broad reach, the programs will inherently be central to our recovery as a nation. Through Medicaid Forward, NAMD and its partners have identified concrete, actionable ways that state Medicaid administrators can and are creating a healthier, stronger American future.

Visit MedicaidDirectors.org to access the series of papers, executive summaries, and related social media content.