

Story Ideas for Cell Phone Advocacy About Reforming Medicaid

In order to protect our Medicaid mental health system and those it serves, the legislature needs to implement Medicaid Managed Care in ways that protect children and other vulnerable populations from harm.

Possible General Talking Points

We know that mental health services enable people to learn to handle their feelings, improve their relationships, and learn the skills they need to become productive citizens.

Only 10 of 114 counties in Missouri have adequate access to care. Must be sure Managed care does not reduce services to our most vulnerable citizens at a time when we need MORE rather than less access to care.

Compassion and common sense demand that our legislators establish controls and accountability over public funds allocated to mental health services.

Untreated mental illness, substance abuse, and tobacco use costs the State of Missouri some 19 billion dollars a year in lost productivity, healthcare, traffic crashes, crime, and disability costs. Licensed mental and behavioral health professionals have the tools to help resolve all these problems.

Make Your Point In A SHORT Personal Statement of the Risks of Not Getting Care

- Tell a story about a patient who received (or did not receive) an accurate diagnosis. Explain why state contracts and Medicaid waivers need to require diagnoses by qualified psychiatrists and psychologists.
- Tell a story about a patient helped by a paraprofessional who was successful BECAUSE OF supervision by an onsite psychiatrist or psychologist. Explain why this is an important requirement.
- Tell a story about a patient who relies on safety net program such as children's inpatient psychiatric services, or services to the aged, blind and disabled. Explain why these programs need to be "Carved out" from managed care.
- Tell a story about a patient harmed by a medication-only approach to treatment. Explain how psychological and counseling interventions by licensed providers helped the patient and why these services should be made easily available without undue administrative barriers and paperwork.
- Tell a story of a patient harmed when his or her psychosocial issues were not considered. Explain why it's important that the psychosocial issues associated with a child's inpatient admissions be included in continuation of care criteria.
- Tell a story that illustrates how patients (especially someone with serious mental illness not eligible for specialty programs) will be helped by strong controls over managed care companies. Explain that the managed care companies are handling federal Medicaid

dollars, and Missouri's department of Insurance is the appropriate monitoring agency to make sure those dollars are spent wisely.

- Give a patient example showing why it's important that managed care companies actually provide adequate mental health services to patients and work well with providers. Explain why it is not possible to stabilize a suicidal patient in the one day allowed by managed care.
- Tell a story showing why it will help patients to have a single set of rules for the Medicaid companies and a standardized billing interface for providers instead of the current burdensome four sets.
- Tell a patient story showing why the legislature needs to place managed care under the Department of Insurance, Missouri's appropriate monitoring agency. Give an example of why it's important they levy consequences for failure to perform as contracted.
- Tell a patient story illustrating why managed care companies and state funded agencies need to contract and refer to all available, local, licensed mental health providers. Explain how this will improve immediate access to services for vulnerable patients.
- Tell a patient story that illustrates why managed care companies need to reimburse services by provisionally licensed psychologists and provisionally licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors and psychology interns. Explain how patients would be harmed if those services were not available.
- Tell a patient story that illustrates why managed care needs to cover basic psychological testing for children without preauthorization.
- Tell a patient story about the need for licensed providers to consult with other professionals to improve coordination of care for patients. Mention that Arkansas provides consultation codes so professionals can do this for patients.
- Your brief, pointed, **EMOTIONAL** patient story here.