



NAMI | New Hampshire

2022 Legislative Recap

Improving Access to Mental Health/Physical Health Care

Our advocacy resulted in the passage of Medicaid dental benefits, new oversight of the state forensic hospital, and raising the income limits for the Medicaid In and Out Program. We saw the passage of a bill adopting interstate licensing standards and greater oversight ensuring that insurance companies comply with federal parity requirements. Our advocacy also defeated a bill that would have allowed short term (skinny) health plans that do not require mental health and substance use disorder services to be covered to be extended and renewed.

Unfortunately, a bill that would have extended postpartum coverage from 60 days to 1 year was not successful this session.

First Responders

This session there were a few bills concerning first responders. We successfully advocated for a death benefit for all first responders who die by suicide. Further, our advocacy assisted in passing a bill that will create a committee to study establishing a review board to look at all officer involved shootings to better address these incidents with the hope of having more positive outcomes. NAMI NH will monitor the committee's activities and will provide testimony in front of the committee as outlined in the bill. Additionally, advocacy secured funds for Crisis Intervention Training for officers in small, rural departments with the goal of having a minimum of one officer in every state, county, and municipal department trained in CIT.

Children

Advocacy for children was a primary focus for NAMI NH this legislative session. With the assistance of partners and advocates, we secured funds to establish a pilot program to mitigate the effects of adverse childhood experiences for children birth to six years old (there is an existing

Find Help, Find Hope.

NAMI New Hampshire • 85 North State Street • Concord, NH 03301
InfoLine: 800-242-6264 • Tel. 603-225-5359 • Fax 603-228-8848 • info@naminh.org / www.NAMINH.org

program for children over 6). We were successful in advocating for middle and high school student identification cards to include the national suicide hotline on the back of the card.

In addition to items we were advocating for, there were a number of bills that NAMI NH opposed due to their potential harm for NH's children. Of these, we were successful in maintaining the existing process of administering the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, and we were successful in defeating a bill that would have limited rules on climate and culture in schools; one that would have repealed the ban on conversion therapy; one that would have added allowing a child to have gender affirming medical care to the definition of child abuse; and one that would have allowed schools to prohibit trans adolescent girls from competing in sports with their peers. The efforts of mental health advocates also helped us defeat a bill that would have forced teachers and other school personnel to disclose to a parent any information about a child who identifies as transgender and to disclose if kids joined clubs like the Gay/ Straight Alliance.

Unfortunately, despite a couple of bills coming forward that would have repealed the restrictions limiting school teaching discussions regarding racism, homophobia, sexism, and other such issues that impact children's mental health, we were not able to make changes in the law this year.

This session there were no bills focused on workforce or housing that NAMI NH was involved in. For the next session we may explore areas in the budget that can support these two issues.