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Coordinated Behavioral Care makes recommendations about insurance contracts

Last year New York announced a \$75 million fund to encourage access to adult behavioral health home and community-based services. Now Coordinated Behavioral Care is making recommendations to the state to address the challenges community-based organizations face in contracting with Medicaid managed-care organizations.

The fund was intended for behavioral health providers in partnership with MCOs to develop more efficient eligibility, referral and engagement processes for home and community-based services and to increase service delivery capacity, Coordinated Behavioral Care said in a brief issued Thursday. CBC Independent Practice Association—which represents eight community-based behavioral health providers—secured three contracts totaling \$5 million, or 10% of the state's available funding for 15-month contracts. But Coordinated Behavioral Care's experience securing those contracts highlights the challenges faced by it and other community-based providers and the need for resources to sustain programs in the long term.

Specifically, CBC said that although the state developed a standardized form for the 13 MCOs that operate health and recovery plans to use to solicit proposals from potential community-based partners, it did not create uniform quality metrics or standardized processes to align contracting among MCOs.

Coordinated Behavioral Care recommended that the state work to facilitate MCO contracting with behavioral health independent practice associations and community-based organizations by developing standardized contracts. The state also should standardize a set of core quality metrics for contracting across MCOs.

Coordinated Behavioral Care further said that the state should provide community-based organizations access to the All Payer Database to support negotiations that are moving them toward value-based payment contracting. Additionally, it said community-based organizations would benefit from access to a shared platform with the government for financial modeling, pricing and credentialing, among other tasks to support MCO contracting.

Finally, Coordinated Behavioral Care said that community-based organizations cannot sustain programs without being able to engage individuals eligible for services regardless of their MCO plan.

"Behavioral health providers should have a place at the table, and it should be front and center," said Dr. Jorge Petit, president and CEO of Coordinated Behavioral Care.

—Jennifer Henderson