

MEDICARE MENTAL HEALTH MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2007 HR 1663

Introduced by Rep. Stark, Rep. Ramstad, and Rep. Kennedy on March 23, 2007.

This is a straightforward bill that improves Medicare's mental health benefits by providing parity with physical health services and by expanding Medicare coverage of cost-effective community mental health services.

Mental Health Parity

- It reduces the discriminatory co-payment for outpatient mental health services from 50 percent to the 20 percent level charged for most other Part B medical services.
- It eliminates the arbitrary 190-day lifetime cap on inpatient services in psychiatric hospitals.

Expansion of Community Mental Health Services

- It improves beneficiary access to mental health services by including within Medicare a number of community-based residential and intensive outpatient mental health services that characterize today's state-of-the-art clinical practices.
- It further improves access to needed mental health services by addressing the shortage of qualified mental health professionals serving older and disabled Americans in rural and other medically underserved areas by allowing state licensed marriage and family therapists and mental health counselors to provide Medicare-covered services.
- Similarly, it corrects a legislative oversight that will facilitate the provision of mental health services by clinical social workers within skilled nursing facilities.

HHS Study of Therapeutic Services to Beneficiaries with Dementia

- It requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study to examine whether the Medicare criteria to cover therapeutic services to beneficiaries with Alzheimer's and related cognitive disorders discriminates by being too restrictive.