



Essential Health Benefits (EHB): Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders - Necessary Services *Updated October 2012*

As Essential Health Benefits (EHB) packages for states are finalized, Community Catalyst recommends inclusion of the mental health and substance use disorders services listed below. Recommended services fall under five different categories and should be explicitly listed as covered to ensure consumers have access to these benefits.

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services

- Outpatient treatment, including screenings, referral, ambulatory detoxification, assessment, treatment planning, medication monitoring, and evidence-based psychotherapy services
- Intensive outpatient services that treat substance use disorders (approximately 10 hours per week of treatment and counseling)
- Intensive home-based treatment, including counseling, behavior management, and medication management
- Crisis services in emergency rooms and via mobile teams
- Residential substance use disorder treatment, as [defined](#)¹ by the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)
- Inpatient hospital treatment, including detoxification and psychiatric stabilization

Rehabilitative and Habilitative Services and Devices

- [Recovery support services](#)², including peer support and coaching
- [Psychiatric rehabilitation](#) skills training³ and other services, to address functional impairments and to avoid institutionalization.
- All clinically appropriate treatments for eating disorders

Preventive and Wellness Services; Chronic Disease Management

- Education and skills training about preventing, treating, and recovering from substance use and/or mental disorders
- Suicide and drug screenings for adults
- Intensive case management for severe mental illness and substance use disorders
- Care coordination and health promotion, tailored to different age groups and illnesses
- Appropriate referral to community and social support services

Pediatric Services

- A full range of mental health and substance use disorders services tailored for children

Prescription Drugs

- Coverage for medications to treat mental illness and substance use disorders, including

buprenorphine, methadone, and naltrexone

For All Categories Listed Above: Parity Compliance

- All mental health and substance use disorders benefits in the EHB are subject to parity law; that is, treatment limits (e.g., number of days or visits) for these services cannot be more stringent than they are for physical health benefits
- Once health plans begin offering insurance products, advocates must ensure cost sharing complies with the parity law, too (cost sharing is not a factor for the current stage of the implementation process)
- For more on parity requirements, visit the federal agency [SAMHSA](#)⁴

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Community Catalyst is the author of this document, influenced by the Coalition for Whole Health EHB principles. The Coalition is an alliance of advocates from the mental health and substance use disorder fields. For the Coalition's official full-length principles, visit <http://www.coalitionforwholehealth.org/>.

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¹ http://www.apofla.com/dl/ASAM/Levels_of_Care_Definitions_1-9-05.pdf

² <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4454/SMA09-4454.pdf>

³ <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1636112/>

⁴ <http://www.samhsa.gov/healthreform/parity/>