

# Resolution on Health Care

*An official statement from the Global Alliance on Behavioral Health and Social Justice*

The Global Alliance emphasizes effective strategies for promotion of health and prevention of behavioral disorders as well as intervention and treatment. We embed our work in principles of human rights and social justice.

We have grave concerns about the American Health Care Act, as it is being discussed in Congress. Health insurance for individuals struggling with addiction and mental health disorders, especially for low-income individuals and families, is critical for accessing effective treatment. The Affordable Care Act has enabled many individuals to receive services at parity with other medical conditions. In states that chose to expand Medicaid, coverage and treatment access for low-income persons with behavioral health needs has increased and hospitals have had fewer patients without insurance.

Current proposals would undermine protections that have benefitted many in this country and at a time when we are experiencing opioid and suicide crises and unprecedented rates of depression and anxiety.

In keeping with our priorities and our approach, we advocate for a health care system that makes access to affordable, quality health care – inclusive of behavioral health care – attainable for all on an equal basis. That means that no one (e.g., individuals with pre-existing conditions; low-income women; elderly) can be discriminated against in providing health care coverage.

Further, it will not be enough to guarantee access to treatment and recovery services for physical and behavioral health conditions. Our health care system **must** include a focus on prevention and population health. Cutting prevention at a time when unprecedented numbers of individuals are afflicted by epidemics such as asthma, depression, obesity, opioid use, anxiety, and diabetes will leave us with a healthcare system that fails to address the root of our problems. Further, without addressing prevention and population health, we will not address the increasing costs of health care. Indeed, prevention has the potential for significant long-term savings in addition to alleviating negative outcomes for many.



## Additional Resources

American Public Health Association, Health Reform:  
<https://www.apha.org/topics-and-issues/health-reform>

Brookings Institute, Center for Health Policy:  
<https://www.brookings.edu/center/center-for-health-policy>

Coalition for Whole Health:  
<http://www.coalitionforwholehealth.org>

Families USA: <http://familiesusa.org>

Health Affairs: <http://healthaffairs.org>

Kaiser Family Foundation: <http://kff.org>

National Conference of State Legislatures:  
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/health.aspx>

The Commonwealth Fund:  
<http://www.commonwealthfund.org>

## Relevant Articles in the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*

Evans, M. E., Bruns, E. J., Armstrong, M. I., Hodges, S., & Hernandez, M. (2016). New frontiers in building mental, emotional and behavioral health in children and youth. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000154> [open access]

Morris, J. A. (2016). Can behavioral health drive its own reformation? The challenges of shifting direction. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000067>

Kimbrough-Melton, R. J. (2013). Health for all: The promise of the affordable health care act for racially and ethnically diverse populations. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/ajop.12042>

Shern, D. L., Blanch, A. K., & Steverman, S. M. (2016). Toxic stress, behavioral health, and the next major era in public health. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ort0000120>