

MENTAL HEALTH WEEKLY

Essential information for decision-makers

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HIGHLIGHTS...

Rhode Island is implementing a **Medicaid preferred drug list (PDL)**, scheduled to begin in **January**. The **state's budget article** that called for establishing a Medicaid PDL **stated that full access to antipsychotics**, and other medications would **remain** after the **PDL is instituted**. However, the state's **mental health advocates**, arguing for **open access to all mental health medications** under **Medicaid**, are keeping a **watchful eye** over this. *See story, this page.*

Magellan Health Services has announced a **partnership** with an **Iowa rehabilitation facility** for adult **Medicaid enrollees** with **serious mental illness** to promote **active management** in their **recovery** and **help them achieve their life goals**. **Magellan is the first organization to execute such a program in the managed care environment**. *See story, this page.*

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N.D. launches training program to treat child trauma victims. *See page 3.*

SAMHSA announces second annual "Voice Awards" recipients. *See page 4.*

Suicide hotline in danger of shutting down. *See page 7.*

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R.I. preferred drug list could leave mental health consumers exposed

Advocates uncertain over status of antipsychotics

Despite some evidence nationally that state governments are turning toward less restrictive alternatives to exclusive preferred drug lists (PDLs) for their Medicaid programs, the immediacy of state budget shortfalls still can make the PDL a seemingly attractive option. State officials in Rhode Island have launched a review process that will culminate in the introduction of a Medicaid PDL by no later than January.

At a state Department of Human Services public hearing last month on the state's plans, which were authorized in a state budget article adopted by legislators this year, mental health advocates made a strong showing to warn policy-

makers of the dangers of restricting access to needed medications. Although the legislative action that authorized the planned PDL spelled out an exemption for antipsychotic drugs, advocates say regulations that have been written for the PDL do not mention an exemption for antipsychotics or any other drug category.

State officials say they will move deliberately with their plans and that access to mental health drugs under Medicaid will remain unchanged for some time, as other illness categories are tackled first. But mental health advocates intend to remain vigilant, as well as vocal about experiences in other states that have found that restricting

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Magellan, Iowa partner on recovery program for Medicaid consumers with SMI

Innovative program first of its kind in managed care arena

Magellan Health Services, Inc., the nation's largest manager of mental health and substance abuse services, last week announced implementation of a recovery-based program in partnership with a rehabilitation facility in Iowa for the state's adult Medicaid enrollees with serious mental illness (SMI) to promote active management in their recovery.

The partnership between Magellan and the Rock Valley, Iowa-based agency, Hope Haven, Inc., will help individuals with serious mental illness to actively participate in their recovery process, said officials. The private, not-for-profit agency provides employment, residential and psychiatric rehabilitation services to

people with disabilities.

The Self-Directed Care program, an expansion of Magellan's Intensive Psychiatric Rehabilitation (IPR) program, is designed to provide enhanced support and resources to assist individuals with serious mental illness in taking control of their health care and recovery process as well as achieving their life goals.

The Iowa Department of Human Services and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the self-directed care pilot in March. The project is funded by the state department through its contract with Magellan Health Services from the Iowa Plan for Behavioral Health Community Reinvestment funds. The first serv-

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