

Access to Behavioral Health Care in Michigan

Privately-Insured Population, 2022

Project Summary

Access to behavioral health care in Michigan remains a significant concern, with unmet needs leading to delays in care, financial strain, and reduced health and wellbeing. This study updates the assessment of mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment access using 2022 administrative claims data for those with private insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare. Access is measured by the percentage of individuals with behavioral health needs who received at least one treatment in the study year. While this measure doesn't evaluate care quality or completeness, it offers an updated view to track changes since 2019 and establishes a new benchmark for future evaluations of behavioral health needs after the pandemic.

Unmet Need for Behavioral Health Care in Michigan – Privately-Insured

- ▲ Just over a quarter (26%) of the 1.1 million privately-insured Michiganders that experience any mental illness (AMI) are not receiving care. The most common unmet needs for mental illnesses are *Anxiety Disorders* and *Depressive Episode*.
- ▲ The total number of people with AMI increased between 2019 and 2022, while treatment also increased resulting in the number of people untreated declining very slightly from 300,000 to 296,500.
- ▲ Among the 294,400 privately-insured Michiganders with a SUD, only 16% received treatment, leaving nearly 248,700 with an unmet need for care. Alcohol, cannabis, and opioids are the most common substances resulting in a use disorder.
- ▲ The prevalence of AMI and SUD is highest among young adults aged 18-24.
- ▲ Men are at greater risk for SUD and women have a higher prevalence of AMI.
- ▲ There is significant geographic variation in levels of unmet need across the state. In the areas of Michigan with the worst access to AMI treatment 47% are untreated and for SUD treatment 78% are untreated.

2022 Unmet Need for Mental Illness

Received Care

840,900
74%

Untreated

296,500
26%

2022 Unmet Need for SUD

Received Care

45,700
16%

Untreated

248,700
84%

Barriers to and Recommendations for Access for Behavioral Health Care

- ▲ While Michigan has made meaningful progress in maintaining and enhancing behavioral health service delivery, ongoing attention to the needs of young people and strategic policy development will be essential for future success.
- ▲ Although many improvements have been made in behavioral health provider capacity with most regions showing marked improvements, there are still many opportunities to increase access specifically in the East Michigan Region (Detroit-Dearborn-Livonia).
- ▲ To expand access, state policymakers and other stakeholders can continue to act to: reduce administrative barriers within schools, strengthen workforce development efforts for healthcare professionals, remove restrictions on scope of practice to fully leverage all members of the health care team specifically among nurse practitioners, and implement statewide data monitoring systems to monitor youth mental health programs and progress.

Details on specific findings and recommendations are available in the full report

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