

Brain Wave 2018 Wrap-up

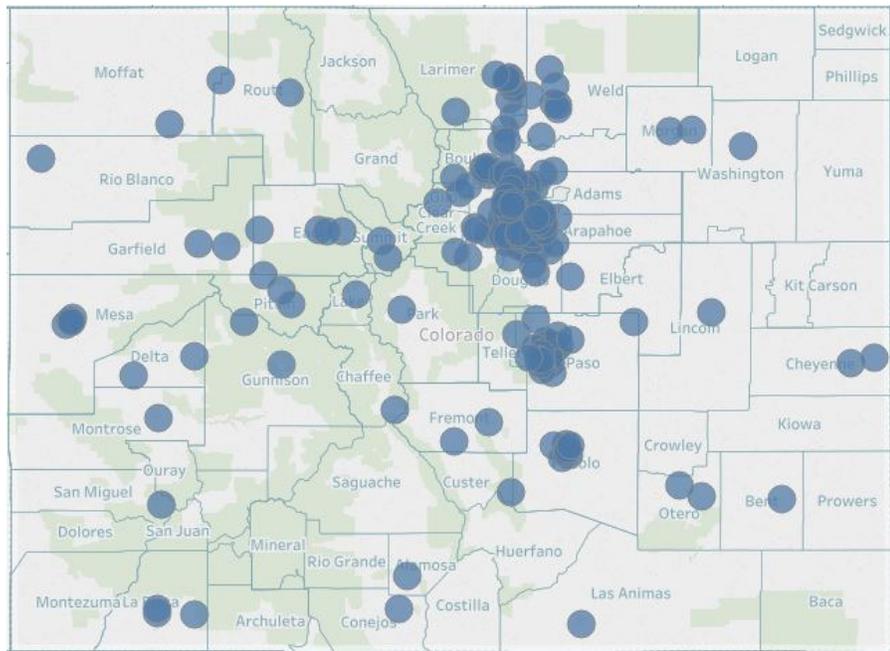
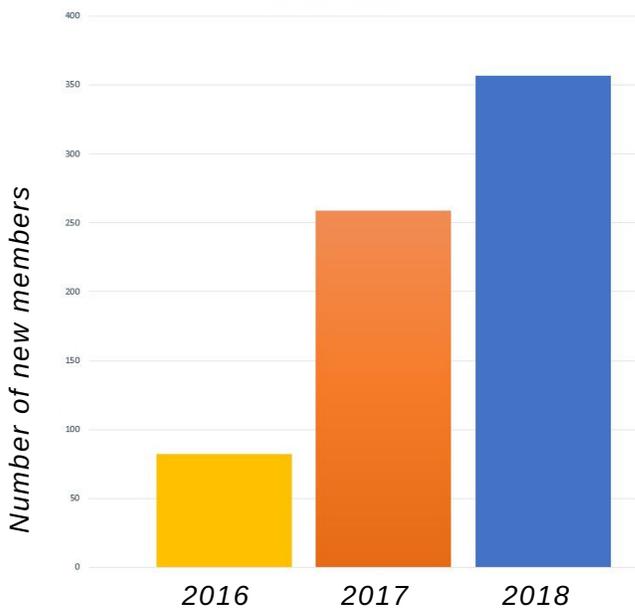
The Brain Wave has become an integral part of our work at Mental Health Colorado. Your stories shape policy, your advocacy passes bills, and your volunteering supports our efforts in countless ways.

We regularly brag about this powerful network of advocates ... so we wanted to spend some time also bragging to you about all you have accomplished this past year!

Yearly Snapshot

The Brain Wave doubled in size this year – now over 700 people strong, with roughly 350 new members who joined in 2018. We reached a momentous milestone this year: the Brain Wave is in every state and congressional legislative district, meaning we have advocacy power with every one of Colorado's legislators!

Brain Wave yearly growth



Current state-wide distribution of Brain Wave

Brain Wave in action

This year, Brain Wave members helped to steer **\$67 million per year to mental health care in Larimer, Denver, San Miguel and Summit counties.**

Members also contacted their representatives and testified on bills. As a result, the following bills became law:

- **Senate Bill 18-270:** Creates a team of transition specialists at emergency rooms and detox centers who will meet with individuals after a crisis to assist in making community supports available.

- **House Bill 18-1094:** Assists families who are not Medicaid-eligible to receive intensive treatment for their children without giving up custody of their child to the child welfare system.

- **House Bill 18-1357:** Creates a Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Ombuds Office to assist people in navigating insurance, filing appeals when claims for treatment are denied and resolving issues with both private and public insurance companies. **The Ombuds Office will be opening early in 2019!**

Brain Wave members also spoke to the media to share their personal experiences and professional expertise, helping to help fight stigma and pass legislation. Check out two of the stories from this year:

The Jones family talks the importance of mental health



You shouldn't have to visit five different ERs to get care, or almost go bankrupt paying for treatment - the Jones' family shares about their experience.



Bill would provide treatment and housing to people with severe mental illness

Her son has had a cycle of over a dozen mental health holds. Judith Wilson spoke with 9News about the change she hoped Senate Bill 270 would bring for them.

**Thank you for your dedication to this cause.
I look forward to continuing this great work in 2019!**