



*Your voice for healthier minds across the lifespan for all Coloradans*

**June 2025**



**We're excited to announce that our 42nd Annual Tribute Fundraising Gala is coming soon!** Join Mental Health Colorado for an unforgettable evening honoring the individuals and organizations making a difference in the health and well-being of our state.

**Date:** October 18, 2025

**Location:** Grand Hyatt Denver

**Features:** Cocktail Hour • 3-Course Meal • Spotlight Speakers • Live Music  
• Fundraising for Healthier Minds Across the Lifespan

Mark your calendar and keep an eye out for our formal invitation and ticket details coming soon!

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**Standing United to Address the Opioid Crisis in Southeast Colorado**



Earlier this month, our Vice President of Government Affairs, Wendy Buxton-Andrade, joined regional leaders in La Junta for a press conference hosted by Southeast Colorado Opioid Region 19. This gathering marked a significant step forward in addressing rising rates of polydrug use and overdose deaths in rural Colorado communities.

Wendy, a former Prowers County Commissioner and recent recipient of the Colorado Attorney General’s Leadership in Recovery Award, has long been a champion for substance use prevention and mental health equity in southeastern Colorado. Her leadership continues to drive vital partnerships and advocacy efforts throughout the state.

Mental Health Colorado is proud to support local initiatives like Region 19’s comprehensive approach, which connects individuals and families to life saving resources, promotes community-based prevention, and works to dismantle barriers to care across the lifespan.

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## In The News



**Colorado’s new Behavioral Health Administration is ready to invest. Now budget cuts are on the way.**

Meg Wingerter | 6/8/25 | *The Denver Post*

“Most people haven’t seen the BHA make a direct impact in their lives at this point, so lawmakers may see it as an easy target for cuts next year, said Vincent Atchity, president and CEO of [Mental Health Colorado](#).

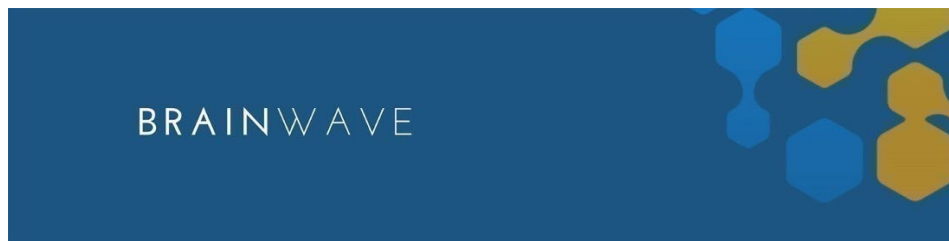
He said he believes the BHA is on the right track, but lawmakers may interpret the long lead time as a sign the agency is failing and should lose funding. The agency missed early deadlines to get regulations in place, though providers and advocates for patients described lawmakers’ timeline for launching a new agency as borderline impossible, given the complexity of the behavioral health system... Atchity said cutting funds to the BHA would eliminate a chance to make the system work better for patients and families.”

[Read the Full Article](#)

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## The Brain Wave Policy Corner

*Legislative & Policy Updates on Mental Health in Colorado*



### 1. State scrambling to preserve LGBTQ+ “Press 3” on 988

- On June 18, SAMHSA announced the federal LGBTQ+ “Press 3” option on 988 will end July 17, 2025
- On June 24, Colorado officials confirmed they are urgently seeking state funding and resources to continue specialized LGBTQ+ crisis counseling through 988 services. [Learn more here.](#)

### 2. Colorado consolidating Colorado Crisis Services into 988 network

- Reported June 14, all calls and texts to Colorado Crisis Services will be routed through the 988 Colorado network starting July 1, integrating peer support and streamlining crisis response. [Learn more here.](#)

### 3. SB 25-042 stakeholder process under way

- While the bill originally passed in March, June saw growing engagement around the rulemaking process: CDPS and BHA are forming stakeholder groups (due by Dec 31 2025) to identify crisis response models like co-responder and mobile teams, assessment of reimbursement gaps, and will report publicly. [Learn more here.](#)
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## A View from Washington, D.C.



### 1. Federal LGBTQ+ “Press 3” crisis hotline option to end

- In June, SAMHSA announced that the specialized “Press 3” option on the national 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline connecting LGBTQ+ youth to trained counselors will be discontinued July 17, 2025. [Learn more here.](#)

### 2. Crisis at SAMHSA amid budget cuts and staffing losses

- SAMHSA is facing a major staffing reduction—potentially halving its workforce—and proposed \$1 billion+ in budget cuts under the FY 2026 Trump administration proposal, which has already delayed youth suicide prevention programs and crisis center developments. [Learn more here.](#)

### 4. Senate Finance Committee releases Medicaid/ACA reconciliation proposal

- On June 16, the Senate Finance Committee circulated proposed reconciliation language affecting Medicaid and ACA, including provisions potentially impacting mental health access, Medicaid work-reporting requirements, and funding for behavioral health programs. [Learn more here.](#)

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## Impact Section



## SB20-212'S IMPACT: EXPANDING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO TELEHEALTH

Category	Details/Impact
WHAT IT DOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secures and protects insurance reimbursement for telehealth services in Colorado.</li> </ul>
WHY IT MATTERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removes barriers to care by allowing Coloradans to access mental health support safely and conveniently from home.</li> </ul>
SYSTEMS CHANGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensures long-term coverage of telehealth as part of the state's behavioral health infrastructure—beyond the pandemic.</li> </ul>
REAL RESULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases access to timely and affordable care, especially for rural communities, people with disabilities, and those without transportation.</li> </ul>
BIGGER PICTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes telehealth as a permanent, equitable solution to expand health care access across Colorado.</li> </ul>

***PASSING LAWS, CHANGING PRACTICES, & BUILDING A MOVEMENT***

At Mental Health Colorado, we are dedicated to passing laws, changing practices, and building a movement to promote healthier minds across the lifespan for all Coloradans. Over the past few months, we've explored how each of these pillars strengthens our path toward health equity. This month, we're highlighting the importance of timely, affordable, and affirming care—and how policy can help bridge the gaps.

With the passage of SB20-212, Colorado secured long-term access to telehealth services, ensuring that mental health care remains available to those who need it most—no matter where they live. **For rural Coloradans, individuals with disabilities, and people without reliable transportation, virtual access can be lifechanging.** By protecting insurance reimbursement for telehealth, we've made it easier for people to receive care safely, conveniently, and consistently.

Expanding access through telehealth is more than a pandemic response—it's **a permanent step toward equity**. Next month, we'll take a closer look at how Mental Health Colorado has supported and opposed legislation over the years to help decriminalize mental health conditions and build a system rooted in care, not punishment. Thank you for standing with us.

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### Events



**Webinar**

## Colorado Psilocybin Therapy Program Launch

Thursday, July 10 at 12pm MT

 **Healing Advocacy Fund**  **MENTAL HEALTH COLORADO**

This June, Colorado's state-licensed psilocybin healing centers will begin providing psilocybin therapy to clients!

On July 10, join Mental Health Colorado and the [Healing Advocacy Fund](#) for a conversation with clinicians at the state's first licensed centers. We will share information about how clients can access care in the state program, along with resources for providers seeking to deepen their understanding of this emerging treatment option.

[>Register here for the July 10 webinar](#)

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A special thank you to our 2025 Elite Sponsor, Rocky Mountain Health Plans, and 2025 Leader Sponsors, Signal Behavioral Health Network & Accessitree!



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