

Janet T. Mills  
Governor



Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.  
Commissioner

Maine Department of Health and Human Services  
Commissioner's Office  
11 State House Station  
109 Capitol Street  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011  
Tel: (207) 287-3707; Fax: (207) 287-3005  
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

March 29, 2023

Senator Joseph Baldacci, Chair  
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair  
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services  
100 State House Station  
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 435 – *Resolve, to Ensure the Provision of Medically Necessary Behavioral Health Care Services for Children in Their Homes and Communities*

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary:

This letter is to provide information regarding LD 435, *Resolve, to Ensure the Provision of Medically Necessary Behavioral Health Care Services for Children in Their Homes and Communities*. This resolve directs the Department to develop a plan to ensure community-based behavioral health services are available to meet the needs of children and families.

The Department firmly believes this work is already happening, and therefore opposes this proposal. The Department has also developed a set of strategic priorities to guide the work of the Department on children's behavioral health services through 2026. I've attached a copy of this document to this letter for reference.

The Department, in its Children's Behavioral Health Services Annual Report, published January 11, 2023, has outlined several initiatives in the Governor's proposed budget that are designed to continue the Department's efforts to rebuild the children's behavioral health system and address concerns and recommendations raised by stakeholders, including providers, advocates, the Department of Justice, families, and youth with lived experience. These initiatives build upon rate increases implemented through MaineCare's rate reform efforts.

Additionally, the Department recently published the [Comprehensive Behavioral Health Plan for Maine \(PDF\)](#) pursuant to Rslv 21, Ch. 80, which includes further planning for children's behavioral health services. Planning has been robust, and we appreciate the Committee's commitment to focusing on implementation.

We wanted you to be aware of the above information as you consider this bill going forward. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd A. Landry".

Dr. Todd A. Landry, Director  
Office of Child and Family Services

# Maine's Children's Behavioral Health Services Strategic Priorities 2023-2026

## Improve the **Accessibility** for Children's Behavioral Health Services

- Implement evidence-based screening tools and person-centered planning
- Implement improvements in the Behavioral Health Home and Targeted Case Management services to provide wrap around services and continuity of care
- Develop and implement a statewide, publicly available, behavioral health service locator tool
- Design and implement mobile crisis services
- Establish a statewide public education campaign regarding mental health and available care and resources

## Improve **Availability** of Children's Behavioral Health Services

- Develop and deploy recruitment campaigns for behavioral health professionals and reduce barriers to training
- Update the system for Therapeutic Foster Care, including the service model and funding
- Review and revise reimbursement methodology for children's behavioral health services
- Expand the variety of services available to ensure the appropriate services are available to meet the needs of children and families
- Implement High Fidelity Wrap Around Services (HFW) to address the needs of children involved in multiple systems
- Continue to pursue establishment of a Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) as part of a full continuum of care

## Improve the **Quality** and **Consistency** of Children's Behavioral Health Services

- Establish a permanent system to provide oversight and quality assurance feedback to providers
- Implement and enforce licensing requirements for all providers
- Continue to furnish provider trainings in evidence-based treatment modalities
- Implement provider accountability measures to ensure consistent and safe treatment
- Ensure a comprehensive community-based approach for children with intellectual disability or autism spectrum disorder