



The Kennedy Forum in Illinois was launched in November 2014. In 10 short months we have learned much, accomplished much, and planned big. Here is a brief summary of how far we have come, and our plans for the coming year.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

Elevate and improve the quality of the public discourse and mass media coverage of mental health and addiction.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Ran a statewide poll in April, conducted webinar for partners, disseminated results
- Partnered with The Chicago Community Trust's *On the Table* to host "100 Conversations" on mental health and addiction
 - More than 1800 individuals participated; in addition Superintendent McCarthy integrated message into all roll call charges at the Chicago Police Department
 - Survey feedback shows perceptions changed
 - Majority of conversations included persons with lived experience
- Partnered with the Archdiocese of Chicago to disseminate message
 - Archbishop Cupich wrote a letter to all parishes, which included a sermon note, bulletin copy, and insert
- Partnered with Organized Labor to disseminate message
 - All union leaders received letter and toolkit with information resources

NEXT STEPS

- **Host the 2nd Annual Forum and Gala.** The Forum is free to attendees, completely underwritten by sponsors and donors. This annual opportunity brings diverse stakeholders together with national thought leaders and experts to collaborate, learn and be inspired.
- **Fund and launch *Reframing Mental Health in the Media Project*.** The Kennedy Forum Illinois' *Reframing Mental Health in the Media Project* aims to encourage responsible, accurate and sensitive representation of mental illness, addiction and suicide in the Illinois mass media. The initiative involves building a collaborative relationship with the media and other sectors that influence the media (including key sources for news stories). Program activities include training and education, state leadership, resource development and dissemination, support for sectors that work with the media, empowerment for individuals who wish to share their stories, and new, innovative measurement tools that provide real-time feedback to reporters and media outlets.

A key component of this project is a new, innovative social media analytics tool developed by NORC at the University of Chicago that can monitor and report public media portrayal of mental illness and persons with mental illness. The tool will collect and scrape online news sources for references to mental illness or persons with mental illnesses. *This tool will—for the first time—enable us to actually track and measure our progress on changing the public discourse in the media.*

- **Host a *State of the State* address.** Each year in February, The Kennedy Forum produces a "State of the Union" on mental health and addiction in Washington, DC, measuring progress and rallying the nation around a shared vision. We aim to model this at a state level, organizing a *State of the State* in Illinois.

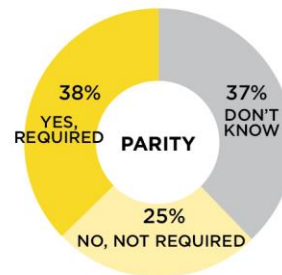
Ensure equal access and coverage of mental health and substance use disorder care.

Just this month, Illinois enacted into law some of the most comprehensive, progressive state legislation on parity in the nation. Our goal is full implementation of this law. There is much work to do, most Illinoisans are not clear about their ability to access covered services.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Kennedy Forum launched ParityTrack.org with a comprehensive Illinois Report. ParityTrack.org examines the current state of parity implementation across the country through in-depth analysis of current legislation, regulatory actions and litigation by state.
- The Kennedy Forum produced a comprehensive [Parity Resource Guide](#) for consumers, providers and advocates.
- The Kennedy Forum in Illinois issued a [public statement](#) on parity.
- We've begun a dialogue with our new Acting Director of Insurance, and will serve as a resource as the Department fully implements the parity laws.

There is **confusion** over whether or not current law provides **parity of coverage for mental health benefits**.



ILLINOIS STATEWIDE SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS

Source: The Kennedy Forum Illinois Statewide Telephone Survey conducted by Public Opinion Strategies from March 29-30, 2015 among N=600 adults age 18 or older

Learn more at www.TheKennedyForumIllinois.org

NEXT STEPS

We want to see Illinois be the most progressive state in U.S. on mental health and addiction parity and serve as a model for other states. Our goal is to work collaboratively and proactively with payers.

- **Include an Illinois Parity workshop at the November 11 Forum** to educate stakeholders about the new Illinois Parity Law, its implications, and next steps.
- **Commission a cost-savings analysis** by an objective research entity, such as Milliman, to identify the economic impact of parity law and regulation, such as [HB1](#) in Illinois.
- **Convene a Parity Leadership Group in Illinois** with key stakeholders, *including payers*, to inform our direction and build consensus around an action agenda with measurable outcomes. Leverage ParityTrack.org work to inform recommendations for Illinois.
- **Map out an effective Consumer Education Campaign**, informed by research and best practices, to assist the Illinois Department of Insurance in implementing the requirements of HB1.

Advance integration, coordination of behavioral health care and prevention into the general primary care medical system and advance quality.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Convened a summit with over 30 Illinois payers, providers, accreditation entities, and national experts at the Kennedy Compound in Hyannis Port in July to identify best practices in integrating and coordinating specialty behavioral health care with the medical system. The foundation for the discussion were two recently issued white papers including this [draft](#), and [this piece](#) on measurement-based care. Key learnings from the summit include a clear need for more effective dissemination of evidence-based models, technical assistance for

providers, identification/removal of implementation barriers, and education around the cost-benefit analysis for payers.

NEXT STEPS

- **Provide an Integration Workshop during the November 11 Forum** for primary care organizations, administrators of medical systems, medical directors of medical systems, and insurers.
- This winter, The Kennedy Forum will **convene a Leadership Group in Illinois** to identify shared objectives and progress measures and map a plan to advance integration and measurement-based care in Illinois. We are seeking funding to support project management and implementation of this plan.

Leverage innovation and technology to advance and improve mental health/addiction interventions and integration.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- We are currently in the early stages of developing an app for beta testing, hopefully in time for the November 11 Forum & Gala. The app aims to connect individuals and families to care, combat stigma, and help people better detect the signs and symptoms of mental health and addiction issues.

NEXT STEPS

- On November 10, we will **convene a technology meeting at MATTER** to gather information from stakeholders about the state of the art, the barriers and opportunities in behavioral health technology.

Give children the best chance to succeed in life by addressing brain health at an early age.

NEXT STEPS

- The November 11 Forum will **feature a discussion about early childhood brain development**, the latest science and how it can help us give Illinois children the best chance to thrive.

All of our work is supported by partners—corporate, foundation, community and individual. If you would like to learn more about these initiatives, please contact Kelly O'Brien, Illinois Director of The Kennedy Forum, at kelly@thekennedyforum.org or (312) 532-4881.

To register for the Forum on November 11, visit thekennedyforumillinois.org

For more information on partnership opportunities or to support the November 11th Gala, contact Stacey Smith, Illinois Finance Director, at stacey@thekennedyforum.org or (312) 600-9496.

Thank you for your support.