



**The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health  
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## **ACCESS TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES STRENGTHENED WITH MEDICAID EXTENSION**

COLUMBUS – Governor Kasich is to be commended for his commitment to improving access to mental health and addiction treatment services through the Medicaid extension proposal included in the SFY 14-15 executive budget and highlighted during the State of the State. This decision is fiscally responsible ensuring that federal taxes paid by Ohioans are used to strengthen Ohio’s economy and ensure Ohio has healthy families and thriving communities. Good health includes a strong body and health mind.

Recent events continue to make us aware that we need to do more now to improve access to mental health and addiction services so our children, families, and communities can thrive. We know that treatment works and people recover to lead productive and fulfilling lives. Extending the Medicaid benefit to 138 percent of the federal poverty level means all Ohioans, including low income workers and families, will have coverage for when they need treatment whether it’s for a physical health condition or a behavioral health condition.

“Medicaid extension creates the single largest investment in mental health and addiction treatment services in more than two decades,” says Hubert Wirtz, Chief Executive Officer. “This investment is a welcome down payment that benefits thousands of families and gives people, communities and Ohio the tools to succeed.” Access to mental health and addiction services are a fundamental building block that keeps Ohioans healthy, supports workers and job growth, improves school success for our children, supports families, and makes our communities great places to live, work, and thrive.

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*The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health & Family Services Providers is a statewide advocacy and trade association that represents over 150 non-profit community mental health, addiction treatment, and family service organizations that serve over 600,000 Ohioans annually*