NJPRA Suggestions

For utilization of

American Rescue Plan Funds

June 10, 2021

On behalf of our membership, NJPRA respectfully suggests that the following priorities be included in New Jersey’s application:

* 988 Implementation Support: Investment in this area could include mental health training for law enforcement, planning and implementation of design for the coordination necessary between mental health, law enforcement and social services across regions of the State.
* Expansion of Peer Services & Reimbursement: The impact of peer providers and their value to consumers cannot be overstated. Expansion of reimbursed peer roles into new settings enhances and improves the service system. ARP funds could be used to bridge the period until such time that Medicaid reimbursement is available.
* Supported Employment and Supported Education: The wide-spread effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted individuals currently served in the mental health service system. Others who have likely not yet sought services include those who have lost jobs, homes, family members and are experiencing debilitating anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress. Both of these groups would benefit from expanded access to supported employment and supported education services to facilitate their entrance or return to the workforce.
* Workforce Investment: Providers across the system are increasingly challenged to fill jobs, especially those that require certifications and licenses (CADC, LCADC, LSW, LCSW, LAC, LPC, CPRPR, CRC, LRC, RN). We propose a system of incentive or scholarship to support the attainment of certification and licensure. This could include funds to cover the cost of clinical supervision, certification classes, and exam fees for employees of contracted providers. Additionally, provider are increasingly unable to compete with the salaries and signing bonuses of for-profit providers, as well as losing staff to other industries that pay higher wages. To address this, we suggest making funds available to both signing and retention bonuses to staff who join and stay with a provider agency in hard to recruit roles.