

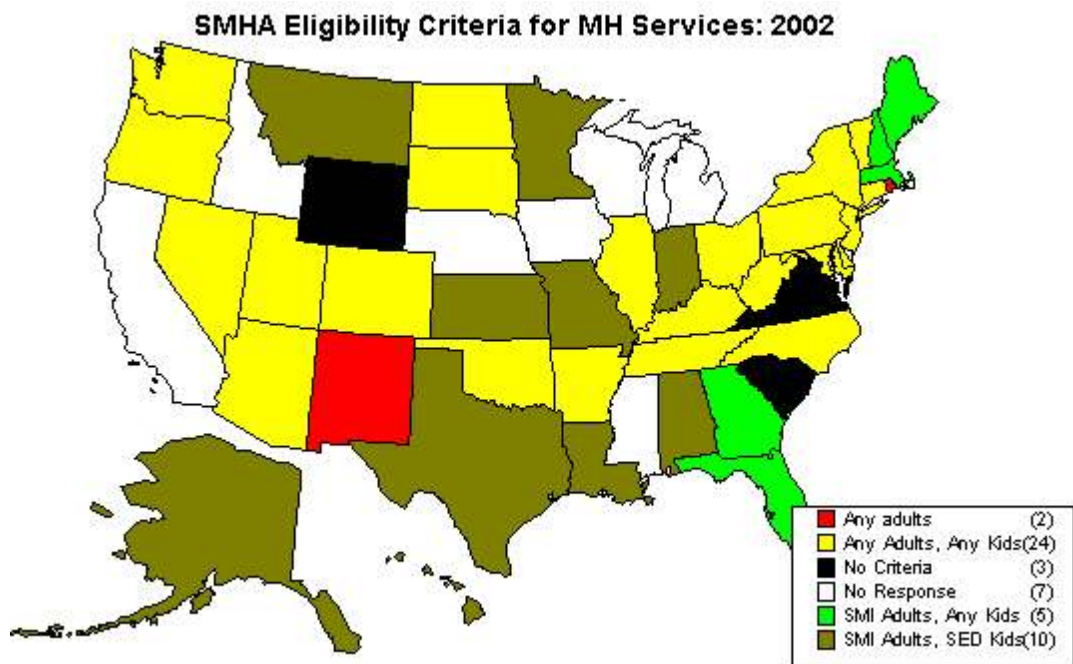
State Mental Health Agency Priority Populations: 2002

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Most states have eligibility requirements that restrict mental health services to persons with serious mental illnesses and children with serious emotional disturbances
- State Mental Health Agencies (SMHAs) served over 4 million children and adults with serious mental illnesses in 2002 (40 states reporting)
- 21 States are working to estimate unmet need for mental health services
- States that restrict eligibility to adults with serious mental illnesses and children with SED tend to serve a lower percent of their state's population than states who do not restrict services.

Eligibility Criteria: Most states have eligibility criteria regarding who can receive mental health services from SMHA operated or funded providers. Ten (10) states reported that they restrict services to only adults with serious mental illnesses and/or children with serious emotional disturbances. Five additional states restrict services to adults with a serious mental illnesses, but serve children/adolescents with any mental disorder. Twenty-four (24) states reported they have eligibility criteria for serving both adults with serious mental illnesses and adults with other mental illnesses. Only 3 states reported they have no eligibility criteria.

States use factors such as specific functional levels (36 state), diagnoses (34 states), duration (4 states), and prior history (3 states) to determine if adults have a serious emotional illness. States use similar factors for determining if children and adolescents meet criteria for serious emotional disturbances: specific diagnoses (29 states), functional levels (34 states), duration of illness (3 states), and history (1 state).



State Estimates of Population eligible for mental health services: 31 States provided information about the estimated population eligible for mental health services in their state. The most common (median) estimate for adults with serious mental illnesses was 5.4% of the state’s adult population. The median estimate for children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbances was 8.0%. States estimated that over 10 million adults and children met the criteria for a serious mental illness or emotional disturbance. The most commonly cited sources for the prevalence rates, were the Federal Government’s official definitions¹ (24 states) and the Epidemiological Catchment Area and National Co-morbidity Studies (3 states). A number of states have developed their own approaches to estimating the prevalence of mental illnesses.

SMHA Estimates of Unmet Need for Mental Health Services: Twenty-three states report that they have developed estimates of the unmet need for mental health services. Twelve states report that they maintain waiting lists for persons in need of mental health services (AL, IN, MA, ME, NV, NY, OH, SC, TX, VA, VT, and WV). Three states report the waiting lists are related to inpatient psychiatric services (AL, IN, and SC), four states maintain waiting lists for various children’s mental health services (ME, MA, NY, and VT), and 3 states report waiting lists are maintained by local mental health programs or regional boards (CO, OH, and SD). Thirteen States reported maintaining waiting lists for specific services. Services most commonly the focus of waiting lists include: residential services (AZ, DE, MA) and inpatient (AK and OR).

Numbers of Persons Served by SMHAs: State FY’ 2002: Forty states reported they served about 3.7 million unduplicated clients across all mental health services during FY’02 (persons served by SMHA operated or funded programs). On average, these states served approximately 1.5% of their state’s population, with a range from a maximum of 3.5% to 0.1% served. As the table below demonstrates, states that set eligibility requirements to receive services from the SMHA and limit these services to adults with Serious Mental Illnesses (SMI) and/or children and adolescents with Serious Emotional Disturbances (SED) tend to serve a lower percent of their state’s overall population than states that serve broader eligible population groups.

Forty-one states reported that they served 434,838 persons in state psychiatric hospital inpatient settings during FY’2002. Of these, 20,021 (4.6%) were children and adolescents and 414,817 (95.4%) were adults. Twenty-eight states reported they served a total of 2,951,162 persons in community mental health programs during FY 2002. Of these, 905,419 (30%) were children and adolescents, and 2,045,743 (70%) were adults.

<i>Eligibility Groups for SMHA Services</i>	<i>Average Percent of State Population Served</i>	<i>Number of States Reporting</i>
SMI Adults and SED Kids Only	1.4%	7
SMI Adults, any Children	0.7%	5
Both SMI and Any Mental Illness	1.9%	22
No Criteria	1.4%	12
No Reponse	1.2%	7

The SMHAS Profiles data are available via the Internet at www.nri-inc.org. For further information, please contact Robert Shaw (ext.124) or Ted Lutterman (ext. 121) on (703) 739-9333 or via e-mail at robert.shaw@nri-inc.org or ted.lutterman@nri-inc.org

1. Center for Mental Health Services. *Mental Health, United States, 1996*. Manderscheid, R.W., and Sonnenshein, MA., eds. DHHS Pub No. (SMA)96-3098. Washington, D.C.: Supt. Of Docs., U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1996

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