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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Americans Support Coverage of All Levels of Care for Mental and Addictive Disorders, National Internet Survey Finds**

(Washington, DC, December 17, 2012)...Overwhelmingly, Americans believe that health services that address mental health illnesses and treatments and addiction services “should be covered and part of any basic private healthcare plan,” according to a national online survey conducted by Public Opinion Strategies for the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS). A total of 93% agreed (with 57% strongly agreeing).

NAPHS commissioned the survey to better understand the public’s perspective on the need for coverage of behavioral health benefits that are on par with those provided for all other health conditions. The survey was conducted as guidance is continuing to be developed to fully implement the federal parity law (the *Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008*).

The survey found overwhelming support (81% total support) among adults for scope-of-service parity, defined as requiring “health insurance plans that provide coverage for both mental health and physical health to cover the same three levels of care and services [inpatient hospitalization – residential/rehabilitative services – outpatient care] for mental health and addiction as they do for physical health.” Forty-five percent strongly support the proposal. There was also significant support for the proposal across party lines.

Among the reasons that respondents said they supported the need for coverage of all levels of behavioral health care (just as is done in general health care) were the following:

*Proper mental health is perceived by respondents as being just as important as proper physical health with both contributing to an individual’s total overall well-being.*

*Respondents tend to believe that mental and physical health are intertwined and connected to each other. Both directly affect the other, and therefore need to be treated equally.*

*They also tend to see the benefit of addressing and treating mental health issues now will save money in the long run.*

#### **About the Survey**

The national internet survey, which was completed by 700 adults, was conducted between September 26 and October 1, 2012. Go to [www.naphs.org](http://www.naphs.org) for key findings.

#### **About NAPHS**

NAPHS advocates for behavioral health and represents provider systems that are committed to the delivery of responsive, accountable, and clinically effective prevention, treatment, and care for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults with mental and substance use disorders. NAPHS members are behavioral healthcare provider organizations that own or manage more than 700 psychiatric hospitals, general hospital psychiatric and addiction treatment units and behavioral healthcare divisions, residential treatment facilities, youth services organizations, and extensive outpatient networks. The association was founded in 1933.

#### **About Public Opinion Strategies**

Public Opinion Strategies is a national research company specializing in corporate, political, and public policy research, with offices in Washington DC, Denver, and Los Angeles. Since our founding in 1991, we have completed more than 15,000 research projects, interviewing more than six million Americans across the United States, and conducting more than 4,500 focus groups. As our roots are in political campaign management, our research is focused on producing information that compels decisions - and then results.

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