LWVIL 2015 Issues Briefing: Mental Health
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The League supports a comprehensive and coordinated system of treatment and rehabilitation services for mentally ill adults and children.

- The Department of Human Services established and is administering the Mental Health First Aid training act so certified trainers can provide Illinois residents, professionals and members of the public with training on how to identify and assist someone who is believed to be developing or has developed a mental health disorder, substance abused disorder or believed to be experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis.
- The Affordable Care Act extended Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008, which requires parity between mental health or substance use disorder benefits and medical/surgical benefits with respect to financial requirements and treatment limitations under group health plans and group and individual health insurance coverage.
- Amended the Medical Assistance Article of the Illinois Public Aid Code. Provides that antipsychotic and anticonvulsant drugs, used to treat severe mental illness, shall not be subject to prior approval as a result of the 4 prescription limit and shall not count toward the monthly prescription limit when used for the following mental disorders: post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, or panic disorder.
- Illinois psychologists are allowed to write prescriptions for their patients, breaking a monopoly currently held by psychiatrists. This new law will improve access to mental health care by cutting down the number of doctors that patients need to see in order to get their medicine.
- Eleven Health Centers in Illinois are receiving $2.4 million in federal funding to support mental health and substance abuse treatment. The money is made available through the Affordable Care Act, which expands mental health and substance use disorder benefits to people with health insurance. In Northern IL, Health Centers in Chicago, LaGrange, Rockford, Aurora and Rock Falls are receiving the funds. In Central and Southern IL, Health Centers in Galesburg, Carterville, Saugat and Springfield will get money.
- A report, filled by the Illinois Department of Corrections in a lawsuit pending in U.S. District Court in Peoria, outlines plans to renovate facilities at Dixon, Pontiac and Logan correctional centers to provide bed space for 900 seriously mentally ill offenders. The IDOC also will reopen the former Joliet youth home as a mental health campus, bringing the total beds to 1,235. The goal of the IDOC plan is to establish a graduated treatment system, for mild to severe mental illness, according to the court filing.