



## **NAMI Tennessee Legislative Agenda**

**October 25, 2015**

### **Passage of Insure Tennessee**

*Continuation of issues from last year to expand health insurance coverage fo low income Tennesseans*

***Recommendation: work toward passage of insure Tennessee***

### **Employment for persons with mental illness**

*Individual Placement and Support (IPS) is an employment service that helps more people with mental illness obtain employment than any other type of vocational program. Tennessee is one of 13 states participating in the Dartmouth IPS study protocol. Currently there is a pilot program in Knoxville and Nashville.*

***Recommendation: Expand ISP program***

### **Psychiatric bed shortage and lack of state hospital available beds**

*Tennessee's state hospitals appear to be more full which results in patients waiting in ERs or local jails for a bed to become available.*

***Recommendation: Increase finding for more Crisis Stabilization Units which include Peer Recovery Specialists***

### **Mental illness and the criminal justice system**

*The issue of mental illness and the criminal justice system continues to make headlines nationally. Estimates vary from 25% to 60% of inmates. Nationally, there seems to be support for prison reform and efforts o decrease incarceration. There are multiple places to intervene including training of police officers (CIT), diversion of non-violent offenders from prison, increase of recovery courts, training of correction officers, and better re-integration of mentally ill inmates, possibly utilizing Peer Recovery Specialists.*

***Recommendation: Advocate for prison reform which includes policy changes for mentally ill inmates***