



# American Association on Health & Disability

110 N. Washington Street Suite 328-J Rockville, MD 20850

T. 301-545-6140 F. 301-545-6144 [www.aahd.us](http://www.aahd.us)

**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT: May 5, 2014**

## **American Association on Health and Disability Supports the “Strengthening Mental Health in our Communities Act of 2014”**

**Contact: Clarke Ross – 410-451-4295; [clarkross10@comcast.net](mailto:clarkross10@comcast.net)**

Rockville, MD: (May 5, 2014)—The American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) joins Mental Health America in expressing appreciation for the initiative and commitment to improving and reforming our nation’s approach to mental illness and mental health, reflected in the introduction of the “Strengthening Mental Health in our Communities Act of 2014.”

During the past year, members of the United States Congress, particularly the House of Representatives, have been examining how to frame an effective balance of person-centered, community-based interventions, services, and supports for persons at risk of or who experience mental illness. The Strengthening Mental Health Act is a commendable effort to articulate, administer and fund this needed balance.

AAHD joins MHA in particularly commending the legislative purposes, as well as the proposed purposes and tasks of the White House Office of Mental Health Policy. These specifically include concepts vitally important to persons with mental illness, including:

- The integration of behavioral health and general health,
- person centeredness,
- access to timely and appropriate services and supports,
- reduction in crises, homelessness, incarceration,
- strengthening community-based services,
- prevention and early intervention,
- rehabilitation,
- peer- run services,
- evidence-based and emerging practices,
- trauma informed care,
- recovery,
- cultural and linguistic competence, and
- full participation - integrated settings – person’s chosen community.

The American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) is a national organization of public health professionals with an interest or concentration in disability and health across the lifespan. The mission of the American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) is to advance health promotion and wellness initiatives for people with disabilities. AAHD publishes four times a year a peer reviewed journal, *Disability and Health Journal*. This is a peer reviewed journal published by Elsevier and indexed by Thomson Reuters and Indexed on Medicus/Medline and PsycINFO.

AAHD Executive Director – Roberta Carlin, MS, JD – 301-545-6140; [rcarlin@aahd.us](mailto:rcarlin@aahd.us)

*Dedicated to better health for people with disabilities through health promotion and wellness*