



# GBPI

Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

# HEALTH CARE BUDGET

# F A C T S

## STATE ADDS FUNDING TO IMPLEMENT U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE SETTLEMENT

### DOJ SETTLEMENT CALLS FOR NEW STATE INVESTMENTS

In October 2010, the state reached an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) to settle a lawsuit related to the U.S. Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision. Under the five-year period of the settlement agreement, Georgia is required to provide more services to individuals with mental illness and developmental disabilities in community settings as opposed to institutional or hospital settings.

The added \$13.4 million in the supplemental FY 2011 budget and \$52.3 million in the FY 2012 budget will be used to begin implementing the DOJ settlement. This funding is a significant first step in implementing the DOJ settlement agreement, which will improve access to community-based services for Georgians with developmental disabilities or mental illnesses. The new funding is only a first step, however, and Georgia is obliged to invest new funding over the five-year time frame of the settlement to continue to increase access to community services.

New funding to implement the DOJ settlement will increase community care services for many Georgians. However, implementation of the DOJ settlement will not by itself dramatically reduce the waiting list for community developmental disability services in Georgia. Currently, nearly 6,000 Georgians are on waiting lists for services, while many more Georgians in need of care may not even be on a waiting list.

### S U M M A R Y

The FY 2012 budget includes new funding to Georgians with developmental disabilities and mental health needs in community settings as opposed to institutional settings. The state will need to continue to invest more money in the coming years to implement provisions of a lawsuit settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice and to serve the thousands of Georgians currently waiting for developmental disability and mental health services.

### MEDICAID EXPANSION IN 2014 WILL INCREASE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR MANY GEORGIANS

Under the Affordable Care Act, Georgia will receive significant federal funding to expand its Medicaid program to Georgia's adults with incomes up to 133 percent of poverty (approximately \$14,400 for an individual or \$24,400 for a family of three). Most of these Georgians are currently uninsured, and many have untreated mental health needs. As a result, this expansion will be an especially important resource to help the state serve more adults with mental health needs.

**THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS...RESPONSIBLE POLICY**

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