

General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2024 Archives' Research Report

Resolution No.: 2024-A078
Title: Promote Equity and to Reduce Differences in Mental Health Outcome
Proposer: Task Force on Individuals with Mental Illness
Topic: Health

Directly Related: (Attached)

2022-A107 Utilize Resources to Support People with Mental Health Challenges
2022-A110 Expand the Task Force on Ministry to Individuals with Mental Illness
2018-B024 Urge Alternatives to Deadly Force by Police and Support Training in Mental Health Crisis Intervention
2018-C034 Create a Task Force on Mental Illness
2015-C020 Increase Ministry and Mission to the Mentally Ill
2009-C073 Refer a Resolution on Treatment for the Mentally Ill (Referred)
2000-C032 Urge Congregations to Commend and Support Mental Health Support Groups
1991-D088 Encourage Understanding of Mental Illness and the Needs of the Mentally Ill
1991-D100 On the Topic of Mental Illness (Rejected)

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

2000-D008 Adopt Diocesan Resolution on Suicide Prevention

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2022, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#).

A078 - Promote Equity and to Reduce Differences in Mental Health Outcomes

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Task Force on Individuals with Mental Illness

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Requests New Interim Body: No

Changes Mandate Of Existing Ib: No

Directs Dfms Staff: Yes

Directs Dioceses: Yes

Directs Executive Council: No

HiA: No House Assigned

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: No Committee Assigned

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church hereby encourage that Congress enact legislation on the following package of policies that would serve to promote equity and to reduce differences in mental health outcomes: address implicit bias and unconscious bias in mental health diagnostics and treatment; address data challenges; address Social Determinants of Health; and invest in mental healthcare professional diversity; better mental healthcare treatment available; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention of the Episcopal Church urge Episcopalians to prayerfully consider how they can support individuals with mental illness and their caregivers; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church call on all elected and appointed officials to advocate for policies to raise the quality and availability of mental health coverage for all people in states and local areas; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention charges the dioceses and parishes of the Episcopal Church with advocating for those same policies in their communities and states; and be it further

Resolved, That this Convention transmit a message to each diocese of the Episcopal Church with a copy of this resolution before each Diocesan Convention following the 81st General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church recognize that issues with mental illness, access to diagnosis and effective treatment, and lack of appropriate treatment for untreated or under-treated pain affect all communities, and there is a disproportionate effect on persons of color, persons with disabilities, and those affected by poverty; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations be urged to pray weekly during the Prayers of the People for those affected by mental illness and their families; and be it further

Resolved, That the individuals involved in undertaking this work remain cognizant of its relationship to other issues of serious concern to the Episcopal Church: gun violence prevention, substance use, suicide prevention, and trauma related to gender, sexual identity, or military service; and be it further

Resolved, That the 81st General Convention, consistent with established policies and procedures, refer this Resolution to the Office of Government Relations, so that it may take all actions necessary to accomplish the intentions and purposes of this resolution.

Explanation

Mental Health is Health. The church can help to advocate for the policies that work, for the policies that are impactful, for the policies that will make a difference. Promoting legislation to advocate for policies addressing mental health coverage and access, as well as other critical issues, is of great importance to the Episcopal Church. Mental health is an essential aspect of overall well-being, and access to mental health services is crucial for individuals with mental illness.

By advocating for legislation that promotes mental health coverage and access, the Episcopal Church strives to ensure that individuals have the necessary resources and support to address their mental health needs.

Individuals with mental illness are more likely to experience trauma and violence. Other major topics of concern in the church such as gun violence prevention, substance use prevention and recovery, suicide prevention, and trauma related to gender, sexual identity, or military service intersect with and impact individuals with mental illness.

By promoting legislation to advocate for policies addressing these serious concerns, the Episcopal Church aims to create a more just, compassionate, and inclusive society, where individuals can access the necessary resources and support to address their various needs.



Resolution Number: 2022-A107
Title: Utilize Resources to Support People with Mental Health Challenges
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention of The Episcopal Church recognize the worldwide prevalence of mental illness and the need for effective ministry with people facing mental health challenges, and the need to continue the work begun with the General Convention resolutions 2015-C020 and 2018-C034; and be it further

Resolved, That The Episcopal Church now equip all its people, both clergy and laity, to interact in compassionate, competent ways with those experiencing mental health challenges; and be it further

Resolved, That the provinces and dioceses of The Episcopal Church utilize resources to strengthen care, inclusion, support, and advocacy for all people (both laity and clergy) who struggle with mental health challenges; and be it further

Resolved, That the provinces and dioceses of The Episcopal Church support the mental health of their clergy by advocating for clergy to be intentional about their self-care, and realizing that clergy, like anyone else, may also struggle with challenges to mental health.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), pp. 850-851.



Resolution Number: 2022-A110
Title: Expand the Task Force on Ministry to Individuals with Mental Illness
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 80th General Convention continue The Task Force on Ministry to Individuals with Mental Illness, in order to aid in the direction and development and provision of resources, trainings, and curricula in pastoral and ministerial mental health care for The Episcopal Church, its provinces, dioceses, parishes, seminaries, schools, and affiliated organizations, among all of its bishops, priests, deacons, and parishioners; and be it further
Resolved, That The Task Force on Ministry with Individuals with Mental Illness be expanded to eighteen in its membership that represents a depth and range of professional, personal, familial, and organizational experience with mental illness, in order to successfully develop and provide aforementioned resources, trainings, and curricula; and be it further
Resolved, That the Task Force on Ministry with Individuals with Mental Illness, in its expanded version in conjunction with its development of and provision of aforementioned trainings, will develop and share resources for The Episcopal Church, its various organizations, and all of its people centered on pastoral and ministerial mental health care; and be it further
Resolved, That this expanded Task Force report back on its actions to the 81st General Convention; and be it further
Resolved, That the 80th General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget, and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$21,700 to complete resources for churchwide distribution and use by the next triennium.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Baltimore, 2022* (New York: General Convention, 2023), p. 843.



Resolution Number: 2018-B024
Title: Urge Alternatives to Deadly Force by Police and Support Training in Mental Health Crisis Intervention
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, as followers of Jesus Christ, recognize the increase in the number of law enforcement encounters with our brothers, sisters, and siblings suffering from mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That abiding in His call to serve Him through the care and service of the least among us (Mt. 25:40). As His followers we

1. **Strongly encourage state and local law enforcement departments to seek and utilize alternatives to deadly force when dealing with unarmed citizens, especially those in mental health crisis and distress; and**
2. **Urge elected officials, governmental agencies and other relevant law enforcement entities to train and educate law enforcement officers and to implement reforms which mandate that law enforcement departments provide mandatory mental health crisis intervention and de-escalation training for all officers who may be called to respond to such situations; and**
3. **Urge all Episcopalians to advocate for mental health crisis intervention training and utilization for all law enforcement officials in local communities.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 1065.



Resolution Number: 2018-C034
Title: Create a Task Force on Mental Illness
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 79th General Convention authorize the establishment of a Task Force on Mental Illness to further the Episcopal Church's commitment to, with and for persons with mental illness and their families as reflected in the General Convention resolution 2015-C020, as adopted and which reads:

(2015-C020)

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church calls upon diocese, congregations, schools and other entities of The Episcopal Church to explore and adopt best practices for the vitality and increased capacity of their mission and ministry in the inclusion, support and spiritual care for persons with mental illness and their families; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses, congregations, schools and other entities of The Episcopal Church increase understanding about mental illness by providing educational material and training; utilizing existing programs such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness, veterans groups, government departments on mental health, local organizations and other programs; and sharing the information so it is readily accessible.

And be it further;

Resolved, That this task force be appointed jointly by the Presiding Officers, with between 10 and 12 members, two or three of whom shall be bishops, two or three of whom shall be clergy, and not more than six lay persons, and all of the members shall have some professional, family or personal background with mental illness, and that this task force report back to the 80th General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That the General Convention request that the Joint Standing Committee on Program, Budget and Finance consider a budget allocation of \$30,000 for the implementation of this resolution.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), p. 894.



Resolution Number: 2015-C020
Title: Increase Ministry and Mission to the Mentally Ill
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church calls upon dioceses, congregations, schools and other entities of the Episcopal Church to explore and adopt best practices for the vitality and increased capacity of their mission and ministry in the inclusion, support, and spiritual care for persons with mental illness and their families; and be it further
Resolved, That dioceses, congregations, schools and other entities of the Episcopal Church increase understanding about mental illness by providing educational material and training; utilizing existing programs such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness, veterans groups, governmental departments of mental health, local organizations, and other programs and organizations; and sharing the information so that it is readily accessible.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), p. 369.



Resolution Number: 2009-C073
Title: Refer a Resolution on Treatment for the Mentally Ill
Legislative Action Taken: Referred
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 76th General Convention recognize the urgent need to find a way to effect a re-evaluation by the appropriate federal, state and local agencies of the care and long-term treatment of the chronically mentally ill members of our communities; and be it further
Resolved, That this resolution be the beginning of a mission for our country led by The Episcopal Church to develop an action plan with the help of mental health professionals, government officials, church leaders and other appropriate partners to find ways for communities to move forward with concrete steps to deal with these issues without moving backward into the abuses of the past.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 2009* (New York: General Convention, 2009), pp. 178-179.



Resolution Number: 2000-C032
Title: Urge Congregations to Commend and Support Mental Health Support Groups
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 73rd General Convention urge all congregations of the Episcopal Church to seek out and commend local members of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill and other mental health support groups for their valiant struggle of many years to support and educate the general public, that many mental illnesses are brain disorders that may be treatable with new medications and other forms of treatment; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations be encouraged to read, study, and implement relevant portions of Resolution D088, entitled "Encourage Understanding of Mental Illness and Respond to the Needs of the Mentally Ill" (see explanation) adopted by the 1991 General Convention; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations offer their facilities to local members of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, and other mental health support groups, for the purpose of educating and supporting family members of the mentally ill.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 610.



Resolution Number: 1991-D088
Title: Encourage Understanding of Mental Illness and the Needs of the Mentally Ill
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That members of the Episcopal Church are encouraged to become knowledgeable about mental illness in order to reduce stigma and stereotypes which are prevalent within the Church body and the Community-at-large; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church and all its units and organizations, be encouraged to reach out, welcome, include and support persons with a mental illness, particularly those who have a prolonged, serious mental illness, and the families of those persons, and recognize the abilities and celebrate the gifts of those who have a mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That the church encourage the development of specific programs to equip the clergy and laity for ministry to the mentally ill and their families and that clergy and lay ministers seek out training and opportunities to minister to the spiritual needs of those who are affected by a mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses and congregations work with existing agencies and organizations to assist with and initiate programs, such as support groups, drop-in centers, housing and employment opportunities, which lead to an improved quality of life for people who have a mental illness, with specific attention to those who have become homeless; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses, congregations and individual parishioners become advocates for public policy and adequate funding to provide comprehensive community-based services, hospital care and research into the causes and treatment of mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses, congregations and individuals utilize the resources and support services offered by the Episcopal Mental Illness Network (EMIN) of the Presiding Bishop's Task Force on Accessibility.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 822.



Resolution Number: 1991-D100
Title: On the Topic of Mental Illness
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, through its national offices, members, and congregations, become knowledgeable about mental illness in order to reduce stigmas and stereotypes which are prevalent within the Church body and in the community at large; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church in all its units and organizations reach out, welcome, include and support persons with a mental illness, particularly those who have a prolonged, serious mental illness and the families of those persons, and recognize the abilities and celebrate the gifts of those who have a mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That clergy seek out training and opportunities to minister to the spiritual needs of those who are affected by a mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations assist or initiate programs - such as support groups, drop-in centers, housing employment opportunities - which lead to an improved quality of life for people who have a mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That dioceses, congregations, and individual members become advocates for public policy and adequate funding to provide comprehensive community-based services, hospital care and research into the causes and treatment of mental illness; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations utilize the resources and support services offered by the Mental Illness Network (EMIN) of the Presiding Bishop's Task Force on Accessibility.