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APA Statement on Interim Final Regulation for the  
Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008

Washington, DC – This morning the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor and the Treasury jointly issued new guidance on the implementation of the Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008. The law requires that health insurance equally cover mental and physical health care.

American Psychological Association Executive Director for Professional Practice, Dr. Katherine Nordal issued the following statement in response to the new regulations:

Patients are already benefiting from the parity law. Since January 1, patients have seen co-payments and co-insurance for psychological services reduced as mental health treatment is covered at parity with physical health care.

We pushed hard to make sure that the intent of Congress was reflected in the implementation of the parity law. We are delighted that under these regulations consumers are protected from insurance discrimination to the greatest extent possible.

It is particularly significant that the regulation will ban health plans from imposing separate deductibles or setting separate out-of-pocket caps for mental health and medical/surgical services. This is a big win for anyone seeking mental health treatment.

The American Psychological Association (APA), in Washington, DC, is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States and is the world's largest association of psychologists. APA's membership includes more than 150,000 researchers, educators, clinicians, consultants and students. Through its divisions in 54 subfields of psychology and affiliations with 60 state, territorial and Canadian provincial associations, APA works to advance psychology as a science, as a profession and as a means of promoting human welfare.

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