

Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance Announces New Schizophrenia Center of Excellence & Founding Steering Committee

A first-of-its-kind initiative to connect, certify, and scale high-quality, lifelong schizophrenia care across the United States into an integrated ecosystem

ALEXANDRIA, VA, UNITED STATES, May 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance \(S&PAA\)](#) announced today the launch of its [Schizophrenia Center of Excellence](#), alongside the formation of a multidisciplinary Steering Committee tasked with shaping the future of care for millions of individuals and families nationwide affected by serious mental illness.

This landmark initiative will introduce a new national infrastructure designed to transform how schizophrenia care is delivered, moving from a fragmented, inconsistent system to one that is integrated, centralized, and built to support recovery across the full course of illness.

Schizophrenia care today is not a single system, but a patchwork of services spread across multiple settings that rarely function as a coordinated whole. Support and treatment exist across hospitals, clinics, community organizations, health and human services, and informal systems—but too often operate in isolation, leaving individuals and families to navigate the complexity on their own.



Schizophrenia[®] & Psychosis Action Alliance

Advancing systemic change and promote recovery from schizophrenia through Research, Education & Care and Advocacy & Public Policy.

Announcing the New Schizophrenia Center of Excellence

A National Framework for Integrated Schizophrenia Care

The Schizophrenia Center of Excellence is S&PAA's national initiative to define, accredit, and deliver quality, coordinated care across every stage of illness by establishing a Center of Excellence for Schizophrenia and Psychosis Care and Treatment

Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance Launches Schizophrenia Center of Excellence and Announces Founding Steering Committee



The current system asks families to navigate a maze of disconnected services. The Center of Excellence defines quality care and connects the services people rely on from first symptoms to recovery.”

Dr. David Shern, Senior Science Advisor to S&PAA

Complete care over a lifetime may span:

Early identification and intervention in schools, primary care, and coordinated specialty care programs for first-episode psychosis

Clinical treatment across settings, including outpatient psychiatry and therapy, inpatient and emergency services, and community mental health centers

Whole-person supports, including substance use treatment, occupational therapy, and social services

Justice and legal system touchpoints, across both civil and criminal contexts

Peer, caregiver, and community supports that enable participation, connection, and social inclusion

The Center of Excellence is designed to bring this full continuum together, ensuring that individuals and families can access not just services, but a connected system of high-quality, evidence-based care across every setting and every stage of illness.

“The current system asks families to navigate a maze of disconnected services at the very moment they need clarity and support,” said Dr. David Shern, Senior Science Advisor to S&PAA. “The Center of Excellence changes that. It defines what quality care is, connects the full range of services that people rely on, and ensures that care is coordinated from first symptoms through long-term recovery.”

A National Framework for Integrated Schizophrenia Care

The Center of Excellence is not a single location, but a national network and certification framework designed to connect and strengthen the full ecosystem of care across clinical, community, and social support settings. It will:

Establish national standards for schizophrenia care grounded in evidence, effectiveness, and equity

Align training, reimbursement, and clinical practices across providers and systems

Integrate care across hospitals, coordinated specialty care programs, outpatient and community providers, and caregiver networks

Strengthen coordination between healthcare, housing, social services, and justice system touchpoints

Ensure care is not just available—but high-quality, coordinated, compassionate, and lifelong

Modeled after successful approaches in cancer, kidney disease, and rare neurological disorders, the initiative brings long-overdue rigor and infrastructure to schizophrenia care.

Over the next five years, S&PAA will advance the Center through phased development—from planning and pilot programs to national certification and broader adoption.

Founding Steering Committee to Guide National Strategy

To lead this effort, S&PAA has convened a distinguished Steering Committee of 15–20 experts spanning clinical care, research, health policy, financing, and lived experience. [Meet the steering committee on the S&PAA website.](#)

The committee will guide the development of the Center of Excellence by:

Defining care standards and certification criteria across settings and services

Developing a five-year strategic roadmap

Overseeing cross-sector working groups

Identifying system-level gaps and opportunities

Ensuring all work reflects real-world care and lived experience

Members represent a broad coalition across disciplines, including leaders in early psychosis intervention, Medicaid and health system transformation, neuroscience, behavioral health policy, and community-based care. Many members are also individuals with lived experience or caregivers and bring personal as well as professional expertise.

The Steering Committee officially launched its work in April 2026 aligning priorities, and defining workgroups focused on financing, care standards and certification, workforce development, access to care, and treatment outcomes. Dedicated peer and family advisory councils are being developed to inform the work.

A System Built for the Full Course of Illness

Schizophrenia care too often breaks down over the course of the illness—across transitions in

providers, settings, and as needs change—leaving individuals and families to navigate a system that does not stay connected or adapt to meet them where they are.

The Center of Excellence is designed to ensure that care holds together over time, functioning as a continuous, coordinated ecosystem rather than a series of disconnected episodes. It does this by:

Maintaining continuity across transitions, so individuals are not lost between providers or settings

Adapting care as needs evolve, ensuring support matches each stage of illness

Reinforcing progress over time, so early gains are sustained

Measuring outcomes longitudinally to improve care across the full course of illness

Advancing Equity and Access at Scale

A central goal of the Center of Excellence is to address longstanding disparities in schizophrenia care. Individuals from marginalized communities face greater barriers to accessing quality treatment, often entering care through crisis pathways such as emergency departments or the justice system.

By creating a scalable, national framework that trains and certifies providers, supports caregivers, and strengthens community-based care, the initiative aims to ensure that early, effective, and equitable care becomes the standard—not the exception.

S&PAA Is Building a Platform for Integrated Networks of Support

The Center of Excellence represents the second 'center' established by S&PAA—following the recent formation of the National Mental Illness Justice Center—and together, these initiatives mark a foundational shift for the organization from a collection of programs to a national platform that organizes and scales solutions across the system of care.

“This is about more than executing individual initiatives,” said Gordon Lavigne, CEO at S&PAA. “It’s about building the infrastructure that makes high-quality care possible everywhere and ensures that no family is left to figure things out alone.”

About the Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance

The Schizophrenia & Psychosis Action Alliance (S&PAA) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing systemic change and promoting recovery for individuals living with schizophrenia and related psychotic disorders. Through research, education, care initiatives, and

public policy advocacy, S&PAA works to improve outcomes and expand access to evidence-based, person-centered care.

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