



SPURWINK

going the distance

Written Testimony to the Maine State Legislature Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services Regarding:

LD1737: An Act To Preserve Medication Mgmt. for Persons with Mental Health Needs

Dear Chairman Brakey, Chairwoman Hymanson and members of the Committee:
Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify today on this important topic. I'm here to speak in support of LD1737: An Act To Preserve Medication Management for Persons with Mental Health Needs.

Medication Management is a MaineCare Section 65 behavioral health service that is critical to many thousands of Maine people with mental illness, trauma and co-occurring conditions such as addiction and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

For many that depend on Medication Management Services, there is no viable alternative. The reimbursement rates for these services are lower today than they were 14 years ago. These services are not sustainable at the current rates and the 25% rate increase in this legislation is critically needed.

My presence here today is a bit unusual, in that I testify today as a former provider of these services. Spurwink is a former provider of Med Management Services because we could not afford to sustain the large financial losses of this service.

At our Portland Psychiatric Medication Management Clinic, we served over 1,000 people each year. Our skillful team worked very hard to have an efficient, effective clinic. Even so, our annual losses were over \$350,000 per year. As a non-profit, this was unsustainable. Though it was a heartbreaking decision for us, in September 2016 we closed our clinic. We worked hard to find new providers for our former clients, but we know that many ended up on the lengthy wait lists that are common across Maine.

I hope that LD1737 will become law and will be funded so that more Maine people don't lose this critical service. Spurwink won't get back into providing this service but many of the 8,500 people we serve each year, depend on medication management services in the community. LD1737 will allow this critical service to continue to be there for them.

Thank you very much for your time today and your work on behalf of Maine's people.

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