



Testimony In Support of

LD 1084 Resolve, to Alleviate the Behavioral Health Workforce Shortage by Allowing the Training and Granting of Behavioral Health Certifications by Community-based Agencies and Hospitals **Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services**

April 3, 2025

Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and honorable members of the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services. Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on LD 1084 *Resolve, to Alleviate the Behavioral Health Workforce Shortage by Allowing the Training and Granting of Behavioral Health Certifications by Community-based Agencies and Hospitals*

My name is Laura Cordes. I serve as the Executive Director of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers (MACSP). MACSP represents nearly 100 agencies that provide person-centered educational, vocational, residential, and community supports, as well as specialized services and care, to children and adults with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, and brain injuries—helping them live full and meaningful lives in the community.

This bill represents a critical step toward addressing the significant workforce shortages in both the intellectual and developmental disability and behavioral health sectors.

We fully support the intent of LD 1084 to empower community-based agencies and hospitals to provide in-house training and certification for Mental Health Rehabilitation Technicians (MHRTs), Certified Residential Medication Aides (CRMAs), and Behavioral Health Professionals (BHPs). This approach will streamline access to training, reduce reliance on third-party providers, and allow agencies to more effectively respond to evolving workforce needs.

While we endorse the goals of this bill, we respectfully offer the following recommendations to ensure the quality and consistency of training and credentialing:

1. Establish Clear Training Parameters:

We recommend that the Department of Health and Human Services develop comprehensive standards that define the required competencies, curriculum content, and evaluation methods for each certification level. These parameters will help ensure consistency and uphold the quality of training across providers.

2. Develop a "Train the Trainer" Program:

To safeguard the integrity of the training process, we propose the creation of a "train the trainer"

certification program. This initiative would equip experienced professionals within agencies and hospitals with the tools and credentials necessary to train new staff, ensuring that instruction is delivered by qualified personnel who are aligned with the state's established standards.

3. Implement Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation:

We recommend that the Department establish a system for the regular review and evaluation of training programs offered by community-based agencies and hospitals. This oversight will help identify opportunities for improvement, ensure compliance with established parameters, and maintain high standards across the board.

In conclusion, we strongly support LD 1084 and believe it has the potential to make a meaningful impact on Maine's behavioral health workforce crisis. With the addition of the safeguards outlined above, we are confident that this bill can expand training opportunities without compromising quality or integrity.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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