

MaineHealth

MaineHealth
Local Health Systems
Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the
MaineHealth Family
MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates
MaineGeneral Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth In Support of LD 619, “An Act to Ensure Coordination of Care for MaineCare Members” Thursday, March 16, 2023

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Sarah Calder, Senior Government Affairs Director at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 619, “An Act to Ensure Coordination of Care for MaineCare Members.”

MaineHealth is an integrated non-profit health care system that provides the full continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. As part of our mission of “Working Together So Maine’s Communities are the Healthiest in America,” MaineHealth provides a range of behavioral health services throughout our footprint. These range from community based outpatient therapy, medication management, substance use treatment and care management to inpatient treatment in four community hospitals and Spring Harbor Hospital.

As you know, the pandemic exacerbated a pre-existing crisis in Maine’s behavioral health system and we are grateful for this Committee’s support of the investments included in the Governor’s proposed budget to create a significantly improved floor for MaineCare rates. Due to chronic underfunding of community-based services and inflationary costs, Maine Behavioral Healthcare (MBH) lost \$16.9 million in FY 2022 after including \$3.9 million in federal and state relief dollars. This is simply not sustainable.

The legislation before you today addresses many services that receive no reimbursement today, but are critically important to ensuring our clients receive the appropriate care they need to recover and live productive lives in the community. We are very supportive of each component of LD 619, but I will focus my testimony today on one specific component – Peer Support (Section 5).

Peer Support is integral to the support we provide our clients as Peer Support Specialists know the challenges of our clients better than most because of their own lived experience. Our Peer Support Specialists practice Intentional Peer Support and support clients in connecting to wellness and recovery opportunities in the community and accessing other community support services when appropriate. Attached to my testimony,

you will see the many ways that Peers are integrated into the services we provide, including in our Emergency Departments to support patients with Substance Use Disorder.

Currently, only two sections of MaineCare - Behavioral Health Home Services and Opioid Health Home Services - offer a small allowance to fund Peer Support through the per member, per month reimbursement structure. To provide Peer Support to clients not served by these two sections of MaineCare, we are completely reliant on grant funding, which is time-limited, often specific in scope and reach, and is not a sustainable funding source.

But other states are leading the way and reimburse for Peer Support Services through their Medicaid programs. In 1999, Georgia was the first state to bill Medicaid for peer services. Since then, many states have expanded peer support services, including Indiana and Oregon.

Research demonstrates that Peer Support facilitates recovery and can reduce health care costs, and it is for that reason that I urge the Committee to vote Ought to Pass on LD 619.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Standalone Peer Support Programs

PEER SUPPORT CENTERS

Peer Support Centers like community centers with a living room, common area, kitchen, etc. They provide a non-judgmental environment for those looking for peer support. Self-referrals welcome.

Locations:

Biddeford Peer Support Center, 15 York St, Unit 203
Sanford Peer Support Center, 19 Washington St
Rockland Peer Support Center, 12 Union St.

Age: Adults Only 18+

Peer Support Available: 1:1 virtual and in-person; groups; drop-in; check-in calls

Requirements: Self-identify with mental health/substance use concerns. No insurance requirements

1:1 & Group Referral methods:

Internal/External:

email peersmainehealth.org; call centers at
207-358-4414 (Biddeford)
207-490-5253 (Sanford)
207-701-4555 (Rockland)

WHAT ARE PEER SUPPORT PROGRAMS?

Peer Support Programs are staffed by people who have personally struggled with similar situations as those they support. They are trained in a model of peer support relevant to their role.

For instance, MaineMOM staff are mothers in recovery and trained Recovery Coaches. Youth peer support staff have experienced mental health challenges, are 18-26 years old, and are trained in Intentional Peer Support.

Peer Support staff build mutually supportive relationships, where both people learn and grow. The length, level, and type of support is based on the individual relationship.

YOUTH PEER SUPPORT STATEWIDE NETWORK (YPSSN)

The YPSSN is youth-led. This means that youth voice will be prioritized in the way this network is designed and offers support. Self-referrals welcome.

Locations: Statewide

Age: 14-26

Peer Support Available: 1:1 virtual and in-person; groups; drop-in; phone support

Requirements: Self-identify with mental health/substance use concerns. No insurance requirements

1:1 & Group Referral methods:

Internal: EPIC AMB Referral to Peer Services Order [REF15401] – select Youth Peer Support
External: Email: YPSSN@mainehealth.org or visit website referral portal (below)

Website: <https://bit.ly/youthpeer>

EMERGENCY DEPT. PEER RECOVERY COACH

The program is for adults who have been to the ED within the last 6 months, identify as having substance use challenges, and wish to utilize peer support. Multiple pathways and self-referrals are welcome

Locations:

Maine Medical Center (Portland)
Mid Coast Hospital (Brunswick)
Lincoln Health Miles Campus (Damariscotta)
Southern Maine Health Care (Both EDs)
Waldo County General Hospital (Belfast)
Stephens Memorial Hospital (Norway)
Pen Bay Medical Center (Rockland)

Age: Adults 18+

Peer Support Available: 1:1 in-person and virtual; phone support

Requirements: ED Visit last 6 months, No insurance requirements

1:1 Referral methods:

Internal: EPIC AMB Referral to Peer Services [REF15401]-select Recovery Coach
External: MBH_Peeremmc.org

Make sure to indicate program of interest for any referral.



MAINE-MOM

MaineMOM treats prenatal and recently postpartum people with substance use concerns. People are supported by mothers in recovery. Self-referrals welcome.

Both Inpatient & Outpatient Locations:

Southern Maine Health Care
Maine Medical Center & MMP
Western Maine Health Care
Franklin Health Women's Center
Mid Coast Hospital & Addiction Resource Ctr
Lincoln County Health Care
Pen Bay Medical Center
Waldo County General Health

Age: no age requirement

Peer Support Available: 1:1 virtual and in-person; phone support

Requirements: Currently pregnant or given birth within the last year. No insurance requirements

1:1 Referral methods:

Internal: EPIC AMB Referral to Peer Services Order [REF15401] – select MaineMOM
External: MBH_Peeremmc.org

Peer Support on Multidisciplinary Teams

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HOME (BHH)

BHH is a community-based case management program that is funded by MaineCare. BHH clients have access to case management, nurse care management, and peer support

Locations: Biddeford, Sanford, Portland, Brunswick, Damariscotta, Rockland, Belfast, Norway, and Farmington.

Age: Child, Caregivers/Parents & Adults

Peer Support Available: Youth, Adult, & Family Peer Support - 1:1 virtual and in-person; groups; phone support

Requirements: MaineCare: Intake into BHH program required for 1:1 support

1:1 Referral methods:

Internal: Refer to BHH program via EPIC internal referral

External: Central intake line 874-1030

How are these programs different than standalone peer support programs?

Peer support staff work with various disciplines, such as case managers, psychiatrists, therapists, etc. and with fidelity to their peer support model.

Most often, an intake is required to access 1:1 peer support through these programs.

GROUPS: Anyone interested in peer support groups can email:

peer@mainehealth.org

Make sure to indicate program of interest for any referral.

PIER (Portland Intervention and Early Referral)

PIER offers multidisciplinary support to young people struggling with altered or changing sensory experiences, moods, and states of reality. The program includes vocational, therapy, psychiatry and peer supports.

Location: Maine Medical Center. Telehealth

Age: 14-26

Peer Support Available: 1:1 in-person and virtual; groups; phone support; activities (kayaking, rock climbing, etc.)

Requirements: MaineCare or private insurance. Must be within 1 year of onset of experiences, which PIER may label "symptoms of psychosis"

1:1 Referral & Group methods:

Internal: PIER EPIC referral

External: Central intake line 874-1030; email: pierreferrals@mmc.org

Website: https://mmeri.org/?page_id=31732



SUBSTANCE USE TREATMENT

Substance Use Treatment combines therapy, medication management, and peer support

Locations: Biddeford, Springvale, Portland, Westbrook, Scarborough, Norway, Brunswick, Damariscotta, Rockland

Age: Adults 18+

Peer Support Available: 1:1 in person and virtual; groups; phone support

Requirements: Substance use concern. No insurance requirements

1:1 Referral methods:

Internal: Internal EPIC Referral to Substance Use Treatment

External: Central intake line 874-1030