



Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services, Maine
The unified voice for Maine's community behavioral health providers

Malory Otteson Shaughnessy, Executive Director

Testimony in Support of LD 840

" An Act to Support Individuals with Personality Disorder or Emotional Dysregulation by Requiring Reimbursement Under the MaineCare Program "

Sponsored by Representative Madigan

April 5, 2023

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Good afternoon Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer, and esteemed members of the Health and Human Services Committees. My name is Malory Shaughnessy and I am the Executive Director of the Alliance for Addiction and Mental Health Services. The Alliance is the statewide association representing the majority of Maine's community based mental health and substance use treatment providers, providing services to over 80,000 Maine men, women, and children. The Alliance advocates for the implementation of sound policies and evidence-based practices that serve to enhance the quality and effectiveness of our behavioral health care system.

On behalf of the Alliance, I am here today to speak in support of LD 840, "An Act to Support Individuals with Personality Disorder or Emotional Dysregulation by Requiring Reimbursement Under the MaineCare Program."

This bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services, to reimburse under the MaineCare program for the treatment of personality disorder and emotional dysregulation. The bill also requires the department to establish a bundled reimbursement rate for the treatment of MaineCare members diagnosed with personality disorder or emotional dysregulation. The bundled reimbursement rate must include participation in a dialectical behavior therapy intensive outpatient program, psychiatry services, nursing services, case management, residential services, after-hours skills coaching and supported employment services.

Maine expanded its Intensive Outpatient (or IOP) Services in the past few years to include a category for Dialectical Behavior Therapy which is therapeutic intervention for those with personality disorders, or other emotional dysregulation disorders. However, it does not include the bundled services that this proposed service contains.

Individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder, or BPD, are difficult to engage in therapy. It is a diagnostic category that has a high utilization of mental health intervention needs and high stigmatization, even within the field of mental health services. People with BPD, especially, experience significant stigma, particularly at the interface of care delivery¹.

¹ Daniel Ring & Sharon Lawn (2019) Stigma perpetuation at the interface of mental health care: a review to compare patient and clinician perspectives of stigma and borderline personality disorder, Journal of Mental Health

I do not often speak of personal matters before this committee, but with this bill I would like to add that I personally have experience with several family members with BPD, including one of my children, and this type of bundled service would have made a significant difference had it been available to him a few years ago. The only program of this type was at Maine Behavioral Healthcare, and it was small, and it was full when he started needing serious help. And then it was disbanded as it was being run under the MaineCare section for Assertive Community Treatment, and it didn't really fit there, as there were no such intensive bundled services for those with personality disorder, or emotional dysregulation. Over the next few years he was in and out of the emergency department, and held in-patient several times.

I personally urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on this legislation to create this level of care for those that are often misunderstood, even within the field of mental health services. The Alliance also supports this level of care being added to the continuum of care for MaineCare members. Please vote ought to pass and bring this level of care into the continuum.