

POSITION STATEMENT IN FAVOR

LD 1224, Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Seek Federal Approval for Reimbursement of Community-based Mobile Crisis Intervention Services

Presented to Maine's Standing Committee on Health & Human Services

As the state's largest grassroots mental health advocacy organization, NAMI Maine supports the passage of LD 1224 to ensure that Maine access any and all available federal funds to support the behavioral health crisis system in Maine.

NAMI Maine clinical staff have worked in behavioral health including community-based mobile crisis since 1995. We have never seen a period of time when a robust, active crisis system is needed more! The stresses and needs of the pandemic and the ongoing opioid use crisis have both exacerbated the need for mental health services in recent years as depression, anxiety and substance use rates climbed. One bright side to the pandemic was a lowering of the stigma associated with acknowledging a mental health need. But as we have all experienced, there is a bottleneck in access to services driven by severe staffing shortages that are concurrent to the rapidly climbing requests for services across the continuum of care. During much of this period, the Maine's Mobile Crisis system has been the one service available in times of extreme need.

During this period of long wait lists for all services, NAMI Maine speaks regularly to individuals, family members, schools, businesses and others as they seek to navigate the mental health support system seeking treatment. At times they are relying on the expanded follow-up services available through the crisis system to maintain safety and stability when nothing long term is available.

NAMI Maine supports all efforts to maintain and bolster funding across our crisis system and urges passage of this resolve.

Greg Marley, LCSW

ABOUT NAMI MAINE: Incorporated in 1984, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Maine Chapter (NAMI Maine) is the state's largest grassroots mental health organization. With support from national and regional affiliates, the agency is dedicated to building better lives for everyone impacted by behavioral health concerns. NAMI Maine engages with leaders and community partners at all levels to improve the state's mental health system through collaboration and education.

LEGISLATIVE CONTACT

Hannah Longley, LCSW, Director of Community Programs
(207) 622-5767 ○ HannahL@namimaine.org

POSITIONS & POLICY AGENDA

www.namimaine.org/advocacy