



**Northern Light
Health**

LD 674 An Act To Support Early Intervention and Treatment of Psychotic Disorders

Testimony in Support

March 25, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and members of the Health and Human Services Committee, my name is Lisa Harvey-McPherson RN, I am here today providing testimony on behalf of Northern Light Acadia Hospital and our member organizations to speak in support of this bill. Northern Light Health member organizations include 10 hospitals located in southern, central, eastern and northern Maine, 8 nursing facilities, air and ground ambulance, behavioral health, addiction treatment, pharmacy, primary and specialty care practices and a state-wide home care and hospice program. Ninety three percent of Maine's population lives in the Northern Light Health service area. Northern Light Health is also proud to be one of Maine's largest employers with over 12,000 employees statewide.

Schizophrenia is a disabling, severe mental health disorder. It is a devastating disorder for the patient, families and communities whose members assume significant caretaking roles for the patient impacted. Functional disabilities due to schizophrenia often persist in spite of treatment and can get worse over time.

This bill proposes to establish a reimbursement rate for a coordinated specialty care model to treat individuals showing early signs of psychotic disorder. The model is based on the PIER Program at Maine Medical Center which has resulted in a significant decrease in patients hospitalized with first episode psychosis in the greater Portland area. I defer to my colleagues from Maine Medical Center to brief you on the PIER model and data that documents significant positive patient outcomes.

Coordinated care reimbursement models have proven to be successful in the MaineCare program including Patient Centered Medical Homes, Behavioral Health Homes and Opioid Health Home programs. This bill advances the coordinated care model of reimbursement to provide evidence based early intervention services for patients with early signs of psychosis.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this important legislation.

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Northern Light Health

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