



# TRI-COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

*We offer hope*

Referral Line: 1-888-304-HOPE (4673)  
Statewide Crisis Services: 1-888-568-1112  
TTY: 1-888-568-1112

## LEWISTON

Mailing:  
P.O. Box 2008  
Lewiston, ME 04241-2008

Location:  
1155 Lisbon Street  
Lewiston, ME 04240  
Main Number 783.9141  
Toll Free: 1.800.787.1155

## SOCIAL LEARNING CENTER

80 Strawberry Ave  
Lewiston, ME 04240  
Main Number 783.4672  
Toll Free: 1.877.208.6134

## BRIDGTON

32 No. High Street  
Bridgton, ME 04009  
Main Number 647.5629  
Toll Free: 1.800.286.5629

## FARMINGTON

144 High Street, Ste. 1  
Farmington, ME 04938  
Main Number 778.3556  
Toll Free: 1.800.559.3556

## OXFORD HILLS

143 Pottle Road  
Oxford, ME 04270  
Main Number 743.7911  
Toll Free: 1.800.750.7911

## RUMFORD

49 Congress Street  
Rumford, ME 04276  
Main Number 364.7981  
Toll Free: 1.800.371.7981

Testimony in support of LD 1090: Resolve, To Equitably Fund Legal Fees for Progressive Treatment Programs

Esteemed Members of the Committee:

As a psychiatric nurse practitioner on an assertive community treatment team (ACT), I work with individuals in the community with serious psychiatric illnesses, most of whom have a psychotic disorder such as schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder. Unfortunately, a common symptom of psychotic disorders is a condition called anosognosia, which prevents insight into a person's mental illness, often resulting in refusal of treatment or poor adherence to treatment. Though most individuals with well managed psychotic disorders living in the community pose no threat to their own safety or the safety of others, people with untreated psychosis may experience frequent interactions with law enforcement, as psychosis often causes a person to experience nonreality-based beliefs (delusions), as well as voices (auditory hallucinations), which may result in bizarre and potentially unsafe behaviors.

Hospitalization is generally an effective intervention for these issues, though once a person is discharged from the hospital he or she has the option to discontinue treatment of his or her psychotic disorder, which frequently includes antipsychotic medication. Mandated outpatient treatment ordered by the state allows a person to remain in the community, often free from psychiatric emergencies which may result in further hospitalization, or worse, time in jail for unlawful behaviors driven by psychosis. Due to the limited availability of beds at our two state psychiatric facilities, it is becoming increasingly difficult to initiate PTPs, or mandated outpatient treatment for these individuals. Passage of this legislation will allow outpatient treatment teams such as assertive community treatment teams to initiate and enforce mandated outpatient treatment in a more efficient and streamlined way which would lead to decreased delays in greatly needed psychiatric treatment for such individuals, resulting in less restrictive means to administer effective psychiatric treatment. This would also lead to decreased burden for law enforcement and enhance the safety of individuals living with psychotic disorders, as well as for the greater community.

Reference for information about anosognosia:  
[https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4140620/pdf/icns\\_11\\_5-6\\_10.pdf](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4140620/pdf/icns_11_5-6_10.pdf)

Submitted by: Rebecca Bunoski, PNP  
Psychiatric Team Lead  
Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACT)  
Tri-County Mental Health Services  
Lewiston, Maine

