

Steven Sepe

From: Pauline Giguere <PGiguere@CommunityCareRI.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 19, 2024 9:52 AM
To: House Health and Human Services Committee; Rep. Donovan, Susan R; Rep. Giraldo, Joshua J.; Rep. Potter, Brandon C.; Rep. Ackerman, Mia A.; Rep. Azzinaro, Samuel A.; Rep. Bennett, David A.; Rep. Cotter, Megan L.; Rep. Fenton-Fung, Barbara Ann; Rep. Fogarty, Kathleen A.; Rep. Handy, Arthur; Rep. Kislak, Rebecca M.; Rep. McGaw, Michelle E.; Rep. Place, David J.; Rep. Speakman, June; Rep. Stewart, Jennifer A.
Subject: Re: Support for House Bill 7876,7624, 7735, 7874

March 19, 2024

The Honorable Representative Susan Donovan
Chair of the House Health and Human Services Committee
82 Smith Street Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support for House Bill # 7876, 7624, 7735 and 7874

Dear Chairwoman Donovan and Members of the House Health & Human Services Committee:
I am a RI resident who resides at 532 Log Rd Smithfield, RI 02917. I am reaching out to you to voice my support for the following House Bills; 7876,7624,7735 and 7874. I am also asking that you advocate for these same bills as, I feel, You would agree these are very important bills which would improve the quality of live for our most vulnerable population. In regards to Bill 7876, this tightens up the definitions of standards of care and medical necessity; prohibits “clawbacks” of reimbursement rates once paid to the provider; reforms utilization review practices (ie, when insurers approve or deny claims for services); creates penalties for violating the law. Modeled after The Kennedy Forum’s parity legislation and holds health insurers accountable to parity laws. Regarding Bill 7624, Blue Cross Blue Shield of RI currently does not require prior authorization for in-network mental health or substance use disorder services. This bill requires all other insurers in RI to follow suit. Not passing this bill will delay services for those most in need, which will only create more of a disruption in care and patient's/ client's improvement in care. This will increase clients’ and patients’ access to timely care and reduces providers’ administrative burden. Bill 7735, Requires insurers to cover, at a minimum, up to 90 days in residential treatment or inpatient services for mental health and/or substance use disorders. Often, insurance companies will cover treatment for just two or three weeks, which is usually not enough time for a person to gain enough ground in their recovery before being discharged. This bill ensures that everyone gets a fair shot at healing. House Bill 7874, Requires health insurers to cover acute mental health crisis mobile response and stabilization services. Crisis mobile response vans save lives by picking up people in the community who are in crisis and transporting them to services. This is an important service that not only helps those in needs, but decreases the overload and burden in emergency rooms.

I strongly encourage you all to consider passing these bills as they all would be detrimental to those we work with on a daily basis, helping to improve the quality of their lives, as they live with diagnoses of mental illness and/or substance use dependency.

I reach out as a Social Worker, who works Per Diem at Landmark Medical Center, as a full time Team Leader at Community Care Alliance but also as a person who has had to seek treatment for myself and my family. I have a long history of dealing with state resources and lack of, as growing up in foster care and attempting to assist my biological mother with her own mental health and substance use needs has showed me how broken our system is. I am in this field after experiencing my own family's need for services and support and hope to

now advocate for the population that utilizes not only the services we offer here at CCA but in Rhode Island as a whole. I have seen the court, legal and mental health systems fail time and time again, and most times feel this is due to lack of funding and assistance provided by those in power. Again, I strongly ask and encourage you to support these bills so that we, providers, can best assist our clients and patients with meeting their basic needs and having access to services in a timely manner.

Thank you for your time,

Pauline Giguere BSW, CCSP
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" Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can."- John Wesley

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