



Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs

Representative Mohamud Noor, Chair
Human Services Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives
March 16, 2023

Dear Chair Noor and Committee Members

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP), I am sending this letter to support Representative Vang's House File 1436 –addressing mental health care workforce sustainability.

The Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP) is the state's leading association for Community Mental Health Programs, representing 35 community-based mental health providers and agencies across the state. Our mission is to serve all who come to us seeking mental and chemical health services, regardless of their insurance status, ability to pay or where they live. As Essential Community Providers, we serve primarily culturally diverse, low-income, uninsured and public healthcare program insured Minnesotans, who cannot access services elsewhere. We serve our clients with comprehensive and coordinated care.

Community mental health providers focus on being reflective and highly responsive to the individuals, families and communities we serve across the state. This work comes with many rewards and challenges – financial, sustainability and human impacts, including:

- Supervising staff/ trainees under state requirements costs (money) to our clinic/ services– under the “medical” productivity model, we lose billable time/ appointments when we pull clinicians off schedules to supervise and train. Clinics are on the hook to cover these costs to keep services available.
- Challenges with finding and training representative mental health care staff –
- Supporting non-traditional students (practitioners) – needing salaries, training and support
- Sustainable/ competitive salaries – mental health staff needing to repay high student loans.
 - ****adding supervision to loan forgiveness grants will help this****
- Challenges with MERC – training staff/ providers outside the physical clinic facilities as MERC eligible care
- Helping staff find a career in MH across MN – promotion opportunities, educational support, emotional support
- Supporting our staff's mental health needs and physical health needs

In this workforce crisis across the country, our mental health system is competing to attract and keep workers in this field. To market competition, mental health programs have the added challenge of a highly-regulated and intense service array setting in a high stress critical field. Our mental health industry needs more people and more training support. Our body is connected to our head, spirit and mind and vice versa. Investments in HF 1436's proposals for: pediatric primary care mental health training, mental health cultural community continuing education, mental health professional scholarships and youth care professional training program help further integrate/ connect our care systems and professionals with full human experience:

Please support increasing funding to the program and House File 1436. Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely

Jin Lee Palen, Executive Director

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