



Memo To: Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
Senator Claire Ayer, Chair

FROM: Auburn Watersong, Policy Director, The Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence

RE: S.19 - An act relating to preserving the out-of-pocket limit for prescription drugs in bronze-level Exchange plans

Date: April 6, 2017

Dear Sen. Ayer and Committee Members,

The Vermont Network recognizes the effort to ensure the viability of bronze level plans in Vermont. However, the Network wishes to express concern that opening 8 V.S.A. § 4089 to possible co-insurance bill will negatively affect victims of sexual assault in Vermont.

Victims of sexual assault facing forensic exams are managing a traumatic and very personal violation. To consider the possibility that a victim would be responsible for out-of-pocket cost for a process of evidence collection and health care treatment related to a crime of this nature is unimaginable.

No cost-sharing for sexual assault examination

This particular statute was created in 2015 to ensure that there would not be any cost sharing for forensic medical exams. In addition, an MOU was entered into last year by the Center for Crime Victim Services, insurers, and hospitals to address payment for forensic exams. It is important that victims of sexual assault have the financial supports they need to address medical costs associated with the sexual assault. It is critical that there be no increases in cost-sharing. Vermont needs to ensure that victims of sexual assault have the financial supports they need to hold perpetrators accountable for crimes committed against them.

Additionally, the advisory group created by Act No. 165, which would examine the statutes listed in (2) (B) (iii) S.19, does not include any victim service provider. The very people most affected by any possible recommendation for change in the cost sharing for sexual assault forensic exams are thus not represented by the current membership of the advisory group.

The Network therefore respectfully asks that the committee remove the provision (2) (B) (iii) from Section 2 of Act 165 as proposed in S.19.

Thank you.



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