

TESTIMONY

To: Senate Operations

From: Ann Ramsay RN MSN L.Ac.

My name is Ann Ramsay and I am a nurse and an acupuncturist practicing first nursing and then acupuncture in the state for 35 years. I have also taught nursing and Chinese medicine at the University of Vermont.

I am writing this because I have 2 concerns.

First as you all know, we are at the height of an Opioid over use and addiction crisis. This is the biggest healthcare crisis I have witnessed in the 35 years of my professional carrier.

We also recognize that to treat chronic pain and prescription drug dependency we need a variety of non-pharmaceutical options for patients. These work best when integrated into a comprehensive treatment plan. We should and need to have as many non pharmaceutical treatments as possible. Acupuncture and specifically auricular acupuncture is a proven and recognized option and a valuable tool. We also need trained people to deliver these options.

My second concern is that there is a shortage in the healthcare workforce especially in primary care, mental health and substance abuse. This is especially true for practitioners who work in rural areas and practitioners who work with the uninsured and underserved.

These two crises are unfortunately occurring simultaneously. I believe these are enhanced with the current proposal that sunsets and/or puts restrictions on the training of ADT's (Addiction Detox Technicians).

I have not worked with ADT's personally but I have worked, trained and supervised para professionals such as nurses aides and assistants who have no scientific or special degrees beyond a high school education. These para -professionals have been part of the healthcare system for decades and we could not function without them.

I have worked with veterans using auricular acupuncture in a group setting with a peer counselor trained by the VA for symptoms of PTSD. I can testify that the procedure is safe and simple to perform and works well as an adjunct therapy.

I am part of the newly formed supervising group for ADT's and will add my expertise in education and acupuncture to train and supervise future ADT's in the State.

Thank you for your time,
Ann Ramsay