

Christine O'Neill, Legislative Liaison
Will Hoser, Board of Medical Practice Representative
Physician Assistant Academy of Vermont
45 Lyme Road - Suite 304
Hanover, NH 03755

January 27, 2017

Senator Claire Ayer, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
Montpelier, VT 05601

Dear Senator Ayer:

The Physician Assistant Academy of Vermont (PAAV) supports efforts to expand the services offered by the Vermont Practitioner Health Program.

We believe that enabling the Vermont Practitioner Health Program to be able to offer confidential services tailored to medical professionals with mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and burnout would provide an important resource for physician assistants in our state. We hope that this will provide a safe resource where clinicians can turn for help before their condition begins to impact their ability to practice medicine. However, if their condition rises to the level of Board of Medical Practice involvement, VPHP will also be able to provide services to help monitor a clinician and/or help them return to practice safely. This can be an important tool in strengthening and retaining our health care workforce.

We understand that to meet the needs of an increased number of participants with a different set of clinical needs, the VPHP program will require additional staff. The PAAV would support a future increase in the assessment on physician assistant licensing fees to fund the VPHP program from \$10 every two years to \$20 every two years.

Please contact us if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Christine O'Neill, PA-C
Legislative Liaison

Will Hoser, PA-C
Chair, Board of Medical Practice