

Memorandum

To: House Health Care Committee
From: Susan Hall, LCMHC, DCC, CCATP
Vermont Mental Health Counselors Association
Date: March 25, 2019
Re: S.42

Thank you for the opportunity to present Vermont Mental Health Counselors Association's support of S.42. We agree that at least one health care provider should be appointed to the GMCB. We request that, in addition to the options listed in S.42 as passed the Senate, the list include a mental health care provider.

It is well documented that mental health care is key to medical and social wellbeing. Despite the fact that mental health care is supposed to have parity with physical health care, we have still not achieved that goal. For example, although 80% of Vermont's mental health care happens in private practices, the Blueprint has still not developed a means of payment that successfully supports integrated care delivery, nor are there enough providers to meet current needs. Mental health providers have a firsthand grasp of the failing dynamics of our current methods. Without knowledge grounded in the practical dynamics of care delivery, policy remains intentional as best. For effective policy-making we need experienced knowledgeable representation on the GMCB.

We request that the House Health Care Committee add the following language to S.42:

a psychologist licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 55; a social worker licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 61; an alcohol and drug abuse counselor licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. chapter 62; a clinical mental health counselor licensed pursuant to 26 V.S.A. 2 chapter 65.

Thank you for considering this request.