

Rosenberg Corey

From: Connie Honer <connie.honer.ma@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 12, 2017 6:58 PM
To: SHS Exhibits
Subject: Please support Senate Bill 860

Please support Senate Bill 860 - I have been a mental health provider for over 40 years. I strongly believe in clients being able to use their health care benefits for mental health; many would otherwise not have access and/or would not have access to providers who have experience in their areas of concern.

It is increasingly difficult to make a living as a licensed counselor as an in-network insurance provider, due primarily to the reduction in provider payment. As such more and more providers are opting to work outside the insurance system, leaving fewer providers, longer wait times for services, and a loss of highly experienced providers. I am currently being paid 15-50 % less per session (depending on the insurance company) than in 1999 when I had a cash only practice (before LPC providers could take insurance).

Not only are insurance caps being continuously reduced, many are now not paying for 90837 CPT Code which allows for 53 minutes (and beyond), and only cover CPT Code 90834 (38-52 minutes), which most would agree is inadequate for clients who are dealing with trauma and abuse, panic attacks, etc., and for the proper administration of many of treatment modalities (i.e. EMDR, exposure therapy, etc.) recommended for effective outcomes. Many insurance companies demand authorization to approve a 90837 CPT code, have long phone hold times to get the approval, and request on-going progress reports and updates for such services (putting the provider in a place of having to turn over private client information to continue quality care) — all of which is unpaid provider time and leaves clients uncertain as to access to services.

Please support the Mental Health Parity law for licensed mental health providers, and the enforcement of it. Better mental health care is good for everyone.

Sincerely,

Connie Honer

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