



Minnesota Psychiatric Society

Improving Minnesota's mental health care through education, advocacy and sound psychiatric practice

January 26, 2021

Rep. Peter Fischer
Chair, HHS Behavioral Health Policy Division Committee
Discussion of Minnesota's behavioral health inpatient bed capacity.

Chair Fischer and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important discussion. At a time in history when mental health and substance use needs are expected to rise, this matter is of core importance to every Minnesotan, and the members of the Minnesota Psychiatric Society are available to provide ongoing expertise about the medical and mental health aspects of these imperative policy issues.

The Minnesota Psychiatric Society (MPS) and many others have identified growing concerns related to insufficient mental health care capacity across the state. There are several significant longitudinal issues at the core of the situation. Therefore, the way Minnesota approaches mental health care provision needs to be addressed comprehensively.

In 2006, MPS published this statement in its report addressing then critical issues facing emergency and inpatient care shortages. Since then, we have continued, with key partners, to participate in studies that have shown that shortages in the delivery system contribute to, or create, delays in access to care which in turn contribute to more complex, even critical needs. Research has shown that we can measure, assess and quantify, to correct these situations – and save lives.

The time is now. We look to this committee to lead with thoughtful, informed decisions about what investments are needed, and where they are needed. It's not a simple question of inpatient beds or community resources, but how we can strategically commit to ongoing attention and development.

MPS members are medical doctors specializing in psychiatry and include researchers, practitioners, academics, and administrators. All are happy to be resources to you in your work. Please feel free to contact us with any questions and for additional information.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Michael Trangle in black ink.

Michael Trangle, MD, DLFAPA
Legislative Committee Chair

Handwritten signature of Linda Vukelich in black ink.

Linda Vukelich
Executive Director