



Improving lives for adults living with mental illnesses as well as maintaining the viability of providers through one voice for quality adult mental health services.

March 2nd, 2021

To: Members of the MN House Behavioral Health Policy Division
From: The Board of the Mental Health Providers Association of MN (MHPAM)
Re: Support for HF 1102

Members of the MN House Behavioral Health Policy Division,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding our organization's strong support for HF 1102 (Rep. Hanson), which would help address a very troubling and real barrier we see the individuals we support encounter as they work to transition successfully back into the community after completing residential mental health treatment.

We are submitting this written testimony on behalf of the Mental Health Providers Association of Minnesota (MHPAM). MHPAM is a non-profit organization of providers representing both for-profit and non-profit mental health providers in the state of Minnesota. Our member organizations provide a variety of mental health services for adults throughout Minnesota such as: Intensive Residential Treatment Services (IRTS), Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), Adult Foster Care, Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS), Crisis Residential Stabilization Services, Targeted Case Management, and many others. The mission of our organization is "Improving lives for adults living with a mental illness as well as maintaining the viability of providers through one voice for quality adult mental health services."

Individuals who are served by the residential mental health treatment programs offered by MHPAM members usually have a serious mental illness and some have been accessing specific services through one of Minnesota's four disability waivers to help them live independently in the community. They come to our residential mental health treatment programs when they are experiencing an acute phase of mental health issues and need an intensive level of services and supports while they work to stabilize their mental health. Once a person completes their residential mental health treatment services and prepares to return to living independently in the community, some of them learn that because they have been receiving "institutional services" for more than 30 days, they have therefore lost their disability waiver and the support services that came along with it which supported them to live independently in the community. The individual as well as staff then have to spend a great deal of time and resources navigating the time consuming and complex process of reinstating or reapplying for a waiver. This process consumes time and resources that staff could be spending on directly providing mental health services, but more consequentially it disrupts the individual's transition back to living independently in the community.

The change proposed in this bill, which would allow for the individual to return to the community with waiver services under the same waiver after they complete their residential mental health treatment, will reduce these frustrating and costly system barriers that Minnesotans living with a mental illness encounter on their path towards trying to live as independently as possible in the community. We ask for your support of HF 1102.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bradley, Thrive Behavioral Network LLC, MHPAM President, jeff.bradley@thrivebn.com