



Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Health and Human Services Committee
Minnesota State Senate
February 26, 2025

Chair Wiklund and Committee Members

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs (MACMHP), I am sending this letter to support of **Senate File 477 – Mental Health Regulatory Relief**.

Providing care in these models and / programs means agencies must comply with all the various mental health services' regulations of the state. We are working to build our programs to respond to as many needs of our clients and communities as we can. S.F.477 continues to move the system in a direction which allow community mental health providers to keep moving toward an integrated, holistic model of care. This bill furthers efforts to update and align regulations that govern our mental health services to better respond to current challenges we face ensuring our services are fully accessible to our communities with our clients' care at the center. These include:

- implementing supervision requirements that promotes critical staffing roles
- aligning documentation requirements with practical processes for clinic providers
- supporting staff for administrative leadership roles who possess the competency, skills and experience regardless of their clinician stature (clarifying staff leadership eligibility within an assertive community treatment team) or educational background (expanding eligible case managers' degree types)
- un-duplicating regulatory oversight and required reporting mechanisms (in intensive residential services)

We believe these policy and regulatory changes are necessary to sustaining our mental health and SUD services, AND we need state investments in our care system. Limited capacity, the workforce shortage and shrinking service access are all connected by the lack of sustainable investments in our mental health and SUD service delivery system. Solutions must also be comprehensive and address both the inpatient and community services up and downstream from them. We need to invest in community services to prevent situations that we can from becoming critically acute care and support community-based capacity for when clients are ready to move to less intense levels of care.

MACMHP thanks this Committee and rest of the legislature for the good work you have done over these several years in bringing our mental health regulations together and steps in you all have taken in streamlining them. We are hopeful this bill is the next step in that good work to build a regulatory system that can respond with the changing needs of our industry and our communities.

Thank you for your leadership and support.

Sincerely

Jin Lee Palen, Executive Director