

Date: March 30, 2025

To: Chair Rest and Members of the Taxes Committee

Re: SF 1402

NAMI Minnesota is writing to strongly support SF 1402 which would increase rates under Medical Assistance for community mental health providers. Rate increases are long overdue.

Many legislators have been contacted by constituents about being unable to access appropriate mental health care. We've seen media reports of people with serious mental illnesses revolving through jails, emergency departments, and homelessness. We've learned of children boarding in emergency departments and families struggling to keep them safe at home. Some wonder if there are any solutions to this growing mental health crisis.

And there are. We need to build our mental health system. It's not broken, it's never been built. Discrimination under private insurance and an over reliance on Medicaid and grants has led to a starved mental health system. We don't need any more global task forces to determine how to address the unmet health needs of people in our state. We need funding to build a system that can adequately respond to the mental health needs of all Minnesotans.

Reimbursement rates for mental health providers are unsustainable at a time when the need has grown so greatly. Wages are low leading to professionals leaving the field, and programs closing. The Department of Human Services released the final version of their rates report last year, which confirmed that rates are extremely low and must be consistently and transparently raised. Funds are also needed now, on an emergency basis, to meet the skyrocketing need and maintain critical services in place today. We need to ensure our foundation of the mental health system is solid.

NAMI Minnesota urges the committee to support SF 1402 which would increase rates for key treatment and support services.

Sincerely,



Sue Abderholden, MPH  
Executive Director