



Hawai'i Primary Care Association

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To: **House Committee on Health**
The Hon. Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Hon. John Mizuno, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2569
Relating to Mental Health
Submitted by Beth Giesting, CEO
January 30, 2008 8:00 a.m., Room 329

The Hawai'i Primary Care Association supports this bill. Community health centers struggle to provide behavioral health services to thousands of patients with limited resources. While the need for psychiatrists at community health centers is largely limited to consultation on treatment with the primary medical or behavioral health provider and the ability to refer patients who need specialized treatment, this is a very important service. This bill would provide for two psychiatrists and a licensed clinical social worker who would work with the Community Health Centers on the island of Hawaii. Since such workers are in very short supply on the island and because the Community Health Centers serve many high risk clients with few mental health resources, this pilot program would provide a wonderful adjunct to other services there.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in favor of this measure.

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COMMITTEE ON HOUSE HEALTH
Rep. Josh Green, MD, Chair
Rep. John Mizuno, Vice-Chair

Re: HB 2569, Relating to Mental Health

*Please deliver
5 copies to Clerk in Rm. 436
HLT: 1/30/08 at 8:00 in Rm.
329*

SUPPORT

Hawaii's federally qualified community health centers form vital network of care, responsive to the needs of each community served and in some areas of rural Hawaii, they are the only available health care provider.

Federally qualified community health centers have seen a rise in the numbers of patients they serve with mental illness which includes substance abuse. Some of the community health centers are reporting as much as 50% of all patients seen have a mental health or substance abuse disorder diagnosis. However, only 4 of the 13 rural FQHCs have employment positions for psychiatry.

The federally qualified community health centers were set up as a primary health center to provider general health care. Up until a few years ago, psychiatric services could not even be offered through the FQHC. The high incidence of reportable mental health disorders led to the recent change when psychiatric services were recognized as an allowable use of federal dollars within the FQHC system. The change in policy did not come with additional funding to support hiring of psychiatrists or APRN Rx.

Individuals with mental health or substance abuse disorders generally are reluctant to admit they are impaired. However, these same persons will enter a community health center (CHC) when ill giving the CHC providers the opportunity to engage the patient, diagnose and provide treatment. With a psychiatrist or APRN Rx on staff or available for consultation, the chances dramatically increase for the patient to receive the correct medical care they need for a healthy mind and body.

The model we are seeking to implement through this measure is the integrated collaborative health care model. Integrating psychiatry to behavioral health team makes a more powerful and, as will hopefully be demonstrated by this pilot project, cost-efficient primary care model.

Solid research has demonstrated when psychiatry is 'carved-in' to the primary care setting, patients outcomes improve and the overall ability of the FQHC providers to treat the mental health patient rises. Other states have been able to successfully demonstrate improved patient outcomes and increased ability of all the FQHC providers to better treat the mental health patient when psychiatry is part of the behavioral health team.

To not provide psychiatric services in the primary care setting contributes to risk factors we are seeing in Hawaii: homelessness, suicide, increased disability, substance abuse, and inappropriate incarceration. The costs of untreated mental illness are staggering.

The federally qualified community health centers see a large number of the uninsured, MedQuest and homeless population many of whom have a mental health complaint. Physicians in private practice are unable to sustain business by seeing an exclusive patient load of uninsured or MedQuest patients.

The State of Hawaii recognizes its role to provide services to the uninsured, homeless and Medicaid/Medicare populations in the variety of programs and insurance it offers. However, on the Island of Hawaii there is a lack of psychiatry providers. Establishing a pilot project to support psychiatry position(s) in the federally qualified health centers on the Island of Hawaii will:

1. Fill the immediate need for psychiatry providers to improve access
2. Allow the pilot to test the feasibility of sustaining psychiatry positions within the FQHCs
3. Raise the ability of all FQHC staff in treating the mentally ill to include those with addiction disorders.

The funding request via this legislation would be to fund a full-time psychiatrist or APRN Rx for the Bay Clinic and one part-time or full-time psychiatrist or APRN Rx and full-time licensed clinical social worker for West Hawaii Community Health Center, if they determine the need. We are still in the process of working on budgets.

To make the pilot project a success funds are needed to provide for the full salary of the psychiatrist or APRN Rx and licensed clinical social workers for one year.

We do ask the bill be amended to include the following:

1. Wherever there is reference to a psychiatrist, it be amended to state psychiatrist or APRN Rx
2. SECTION 2: Page 2, Line 22, delete [rural health division] and replace with Office of Planning, Policy and Program Development or Family Health Services Division
3. SECTION 2: Page 3, Line 2 add after psychiatrists or APRN Rx to treat patients and
4. SECTION 2: Page 3, Line 6, delete [two psychiatrists and a licensed clinical social worker] and replace with one full-time psychiatrist or APRN Rx and one full-time licensed clinical social worker for the Bay Clinic and one part-time psychiatrist or APRN Rx and one full-time licensed clinical social worker for West Hawaii Community Health Center

Thank you for your consideration to pass HB 2569, Relating to Mental Health with the suggested amendments.

PSYCHIATRIC ACCESS COLLABORATION

Additional Information of Interest

Some statistics which may be of interest to the House Health Committee are the number of psychiatrists in Hawaii compared to the nation and the distribution of psychiatrists by County. The numbers demonstrate that Hawaii does much better when compared to the rest of the country, but it is in the distribution of psychiatric providers that we fall short.

of Psychiatrists per 100,000 and Psychiatrist Distribution in Hawaii:

- Average # of Hawaii psychiatrists per 100,000 **17.4**
- GMENAC* standard per 100,000 (considered best practice) **15.4**
- Average Requirement Benchmark (ARB) per 100,000 8.1
- Kaiser Permanente (1996) Benchmark per 100,000 3.8
- National average **11.2**

**Graduate Medical Education National Advisory Committee*

Comparing the Hawaii numbers by county is done as a rough estimate, using 2005 census figures:

- Honolulu psychiatrists per 100,000 above GMENAC 17.7
- Hawaii County psychiatrists per 100,000 11.1
- Maui County psychiatrists per 100,000 15
- Kauai County psychiatrists per 100,000 16.1

FACT: Hawaii is #9 in the nation for psychiatrists and #2 for child and adolescent psychiatrists however this is not much help to rural Hawaii as what is the same in all medical specialties, the majority of psychiatrists are clustered in the urban areas of Oahu.

Bay Clinic, Inc.
224 Haili St.
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

January 30, 2008
8:00 a.m., Room 329

To: **House Committee on Health**
The Hon. Josh Green, MD, Chair
The Hon. John Mizuno, Vice Chair

From: Paul Strauss, CEO

Re: Support for HB 2569, Relating to Mental Health

The Bay Clinic, Inc. strongly supports this measure. We serve 15,000 people per year in the most geographically expansive and underserved areas of the state. Arguably, these people are at higher risk for behavioral health problems than most of the state. Most of our patients are poor and either uninsured or covered by Medicaid. According to the 2006 Department of Health Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) report, Hilo and Puna/Ka'ū – the districts we serve – reported the highest numbers of people who:

- Suffered poor mental health in the past 30 days (10% for both areas);
- Did not seek care because of cost (17% for Puna/Ka'ū and 11% for Hilo); and
- Do not have a personal doctor (19% for Puna/Ka'ū and 17% for Hilo).

Bay Clinic offers comprehensive primary care, integrating mental health into its other services. This approach makes it much more likely that people who need mental health care will get it. At the same time, the availability of mental health services on site enhances medical care by increasing patient compliance and reducing unnecessary visits. While our integrated model has the potential to work very well, it has been hampered by the serious shortage of available mental health professionals. This bill would be a real boon for our patients and our health center because it would make psychiatrists available to consult with our primary care medical and behavioral health clinicians. Additionally, these psychiatrists would take referrals for seriously ill patients who currently cannot get treatment on island. We would also welcome the services of a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this bill. We look forward to working with the other Community Health Centers in Hawai'i County to make good use of this service.

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mizuno1-Edgar

From: RWSurber [rwsurber@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2008 7:59 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Cc: lydiahpma@aol.com; sharlene.chun-lum@doh.hawaii.gov; rupert.goetz@doh.hawaii.gov; mosgotenergy@hotmail.com; rene dela cruz
Subject: Support HB 2569

Aloha,

Please support HB 2569. As a member of the Mental Health Transformation Grant State Incentive Grant (MHT-SIG) Workforce Development Subgroup and the County of Hawaii Health Workforce Development Committee I am acutely aware of the strong and demonstrated need for mental health services in Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) on the Big Island, for the following reasons:

1. The MHT-SIG is recommending that the State of Hawaii declare an emergency to address the shortage of mental health professionals on the neighbor islands.
2. The County of Hawaii has declared a crisis in the shortage of health providers including mental health providers.
3. Supporting additional mental health providers in FQHC's would be an excellent strategy to begin to address the shortage of behavioral health providers on the Big Island.
4. Including providers in FQHC's addresses other priorities in mental health services including
 - a. Improving access for low income individuals and families
 - b. Reducing disparities in access for underserved populations
 - c. Integrating mental health and primary care services

I thank you for your consideration and look forward to the passage of HB2569, and, more importantly, increased access to mental health services on the Big Island for those with the least access to the treatment they need.

Mahalo,

Robert Surber

Robert Surber & Associates
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For Health & Human Services*
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From: namioahu [namihawaii@hawaiiantel.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2008 11:08 AM
To: HLTtestimony
Subject: H.B. 2569

From Marion Poirier, Executive Director, NAMI HAWAII
Wednesday, January 30, 2008 8:00 a.m. Conf. Room 329
State Capitol
H.B. 2569
5 copies requested

Chair Green and Members of the House Health Committee:

SUPPORT H.B. 2569

My name is Marion Poirier. I am the Executive Director of NAMI HAWAII--the merged product of the two former organizations named NAMI OAHU and NAMI HAWAII. We are one of over 1,000 affiliates of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. We provide support, education and advocacy programs for people affected by serious mental illnesses.

We SUPPORT H.B. 2569 RELATING TO MENTAL ILLNESS which establishes the psychiatric health services pilot project which enables psychiatrists to collaborate with primary care physicians at federally qualified health centers for psychiatric care patients. It makes an appropriation. This bill will:

- Improve outcomes for patients
- Enhance healthcare in a cost-effective fashion
- Improve healthcare for the citizens of Hawaii

We have ONE AMENDMENT and that is to have the language read psychiatrist or APRN Rx. APRN Rx's are registered nurses with advanced graduate degrees who have been authorized by the state with prescriptive authority. These nurses will enhance the overall healthcare delivery system, and are critically needed as well.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to strongly support this measure. If we can be of further assistance, please call on us.

Marion Poirier, Executive Director
NAMI HAWAII

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