From: drcwknapp@comcast.net
To: melissa.bailey@vermont.gov
Cc: Dr. Rick Barnett; Lynda Marshall; jordan@middlebury.edu
Subject: Prescriptive Authority for Vermont Psychologists with Advanced Training
Date: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 5:49:27 PM

Dear Commissioner Bailey:

Several years ago, the Board of the Vermont Psychological Association voted to pursue legislation to authorize prescriptive authority for doctoral level psychologists in Vermont with advanced training in Psychopharmacology (RxP). As I believe you are aware, this is an issue that has been promoted by the American Psychological Association for many years. The training for prescribing psychologists includes obtaining a doctorate in psychology, an additional, rigorous master's degree in psychopharmacology, passing a national examination, and additional prescriptive practice under supervision of a licensed prescriber, with an identified number of cases during the supervision period.

In 1988, the U.S. Department of Defense approved and implemented a pilot project to train psychologists to prescribe psychotropic medications under certain circumstances. Guam became the first U.S. territory to approve RxP legislation in 1999, and New Mexico became the first state to approve RxP legislation in 2002. Louisiana passed legislation in 2004, and In 2014, Illinois became the third state to approve RxP legislation. Iowa became the fourth state to grant prescriptive authority in 2016 and this year in April, Idaho became the fifth state to grant prescriptive authority. A number of other states have introduced similar bills and are continuing to pursue prescriptive authority in their states.

In Vermont, there is a continued, and increased need for additional prescribers who have advanced knowledge about both medical and non-medical therapeutic approaches to treating psychological disorders, so that appropriate medications can be dispensed conjointly with alternative treatments, and titrated changes in medication levels can be based on more solid evidence of therapeutic progress, stability or regression. Prescriptive authority for psychologists in Vermont is fully consistent with integrate health care and can serve to further quality mental health care for the citizens of our state.

VPA is committed to continuing the effort to pass RxP legislation. A bill has already been introduced in the Vermont House and we anticipate a Senate bill in the coming session. We hope that you will support this initiative when you are asked to testify and would appreciate hearing your perspective on the legislation. I am aware that you have had an initial meeting with Dr. Rick Barnett, our Legislative Committee Chairperson, and we would be pleased to discuss with you any additional questions or concerns which you may have.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you and hope that you have a relaxing Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

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