

Kevin Mullin

Chair, Green Mountain Care Board

144 State Street

Montpelier, VT 05602

Dear Chair Mullin and Members of the Green Mountain Care Board:

The Wellness Workforce Coalition is a statewide consortium of peer-run organizations and peer support programs within designated agencies which supports training and advocacy for Vermont's mental health peer workforce.

We are concerned that despite the fact that mental health -- specifically reduction of Vermont's high rate of suicide -- is a primary goal under the All Payer waiver, no one from OneCare has reached out to us regarding the role of peer support and the reimbursement of peer support staff to provide integrated care to Vermonters who are facing mental health challenges. The use of peer support is an evidence-based practice, clearly endorsed by the Department of Mental Health in Section 5 of Vermont2017: Reforming Vermont's Mental Health System, Report to the Legislature on the Implementation of Act 82. As such, the use of peer support should be integral to the reformed payment structure under Accountable Care Organizations, in particular since the Vermont legislature, in supporting the waiver, directed that parity be fully applied. Further, peer services must be included in order to meet statutory requirements that ACO's collaborate with community-based providers (18 V.S.A. §9382(a)(11)), prevent duplication of services that are provided by existing, efficient, effective, and high-quality community based providers (18 V.S.A. §9382(b)(1)(F)), and not diminish access to any community-based service (18 V.S.A. §9382(a)(14)).

We look forward to collaborating with you in order to integrate peer services in mental health into ACO's in an effective and seamless way.

Sincerely,

Vicki Warfield

Coordinator, Wellness Workforce Coalition

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