

Friday, February 26, 2021

Health and Government Operations Committee
Alcohol and Drug Trainee (ADT) Practice through TeleHealth
Support of House Bill 1287

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To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to strongly urge for a favorable opinion on HB-1287, to allow Alcohol and Drug Trainee (ADT) counselors to continue the provision of telehealth counseling after the current declared Public Health Emergency (PHE). As essential healthcare providers, substance use disorder (SUD) programs with ADT counselors remained open during this pandemic, adding TeleHealth counseling to provide life-saving services. We have learned from experience that TeleHealth counseling is an essential and successful mode of behavioral health service delivery. Telehealth expands access and flexibility to receive counseling, improves treatment retention and reduces systemic barriers and stigma associated with counseling within brick and mortar facilities – all while increasing patient and community safety by allowing social distancing and self-quarantine.

Continued telehealth facilitates patient choice to receive counseling services in an effective and accessible manner that supports continued recovery. Its successful use during the pandemic has demonstrated that there is no reason not to allow our entire counseling workforce and all of our clients to utilize telehealth technology – telehealth should remain as an available service delivery option after the PHE ends.

HB-1287 will permit ADT counselors to continue to provide telehealth counseling while working for licensed SUD programs, and receiving necessary supervision. With the amount of turmoil Maryland citizens experiencing active addiction are trying to navigate on a daily basis, we have to do everything that we can in order to continue providing as much assistance and support that we can.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter,



Marian Currens