



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor



LYNNE ASHBECK
Chair

July 17, 2020

MARA MADGRIGAL-WEISS
Vice-Chair

Assemblymember Jim Wood, Chair
California State Assembly
Committee on Health
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

MAYRA ALVAREZ
Commissioner

RENEETA ANTHONY
Commissioner

Subject: Support of SB 803 (Beall): Mental health services: peer support specialist certification.

JIM BEALL
Senator
Commissioner

Dear Chair Wood,

KEN BERRICK
Commissioner

On behalf of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, I am writing to convey the Commission's support for SB 803 (Beall) Mental health services: peer support specialist certification.

JOHN BOYD, Psy.D.
Commissioner

BILL BROWN
Sheriff
Commissioner

As an independent state agency, the Commission is directed to oversee the implementation of the Mental Health Services Act. Its mission is to provide vision and leadership to ensure that Californians understand that mental health is essential to overall health. The Commission is also tasked with promoting wellness, recovery, and resiliency to improve outcomes for people with mental health needs, and is therefore in support of SB 803.

KEYONDRIA D. BUNCH, Ph.D.
Commissioner

WENDY CARRILLO
Assembly Member
Commissioner

Peer support is an evidence-based practice for the treatment of those with unmet mental health needs. The use of peer support specialists can reduce rehospitalization rates and inpatient days, increase use of outpatient services, lower overall cost of services, and improve outcomes for people with mental health needs. Almost every other state in the nation has established programs to train and certify peer specialists. SB 803, would add California to that list by requiring the establishment of a certification program for peer providers and provides the structure needed to maximize federal match for peer services under Medi-Cal.

ITAI DANOVITCH, M.D.
Commissioner

DAVID GORDON
Commissioner

GLADYS MITCHELL
Commissioner

KHATERA TAMPLIN
Commissioner

TINA WOOTON
Commissioner

California is behind in embracing peer support as an evidence-based model and in establishing a certification program that standardizes best practices. SB 803 will result in a more comprehensive and effective approach to mental health care. This certification would standardize high-quality peer and family support services leading to increased family support, a fuller continuum of wraparound services, and an individualized focus on clients in order to promote recovery and self-sufficiency.

TOBY EWING
Executive Director

The Commission is excited to support and SB 803, and believes this effort will help provide vision and leadership, in collaboration with clients, their family members, and underserved communities, to promote wellness, recovery and resiliency; and ensure positive outcomes for individuals living with serious mental illness in California.

Respectfully,



Norma Pate
Deputy Director Legislation