

Anita Halterman

From: Rep. Liz Vazquez
Sent: Saturday, January 16, 2016 4:29 PM
To: Anita Halterman
Subject: Fwd: Telehealth

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Begin forwarded message:

From: Joel Wieman <joelwieman@gci.net>
Date: January 14, 2016 at 11:51:03 AM AKST
To: <Representative.Liz.Vazquez@akleg.gov>
Subject: Telehealth

Hi Liz,

Just wanted to let you know I am thankful for your support with tele-health in Alaska. As you know I am on the licensing board and we are working to modernize service delivery. As a psychologist I have two concerns with tele-health and have a couple of additions to the bill. First, that it should stipulate that services need to be provided by a licensed provider of mental health services, licensed here in the state in which the client resides. Telehealth is an issue that our national organization of psychology licensing boards is wrestling with, and this is one of our main concerns. This allows for state laws regulating mental health services to be effective and enforceable, and will protect the public from unscrupulous or undertrained providers. When we can't regulate service across state lines, we should not allow those services to be provided, or the least trained, least regulated (read unregulated) individuals will be providing the service. Our national organization will be meeting in Anchorage in April and you are welcome to sit in if this issue come up.
(Next time I see you at Rotary I will give you an earful if you want the full scoop!)

I would also like to see language that requires periodic face to face visits between providers and clients. So much is lost via phone or Skype, and the client is the looser in this case. Granted tele-health is far better than nothing, but we should strive for best practices and see clients face to face at least once early on in the treatment process if at all possible.

On another topic, the licensing board, along with Kathy Geisel, continues to pursue SB 41 to require background checks for renewing psychologists and new licensees. There has been some pushback from a few people and their comments seem to misrepresent the issue. I will send you a separate letter with regard to that.

All that being said.. The Rotary Chile Cook-off has been postponed to 2/18. Come if you are in

town, but I expect you will be busy trying to pull our state bacon out of the fire and won't make it. You really have your work cut out for you this time. I may be in Juneau on SB 41 issues and will stop by.

Oh yes, about the budget, After you have trimmed the fat, I want to pay my own way. Please kill the dividend check, tax my income, and I'm even willing to deal with a sales tax. It will hurt but it's time for us to grow up and be like the rest of the country.

Thanks, Joel