



National Alliance on Mental Illness

# nami | New Hampshire

January 30, 2019

Honorable Chairwoman Lucy Weber  
House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs  
107 North Main Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Madam Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Kenneth Norton, I am the Executive Director of NAMI NH the National Alliance on Mental Illness and I have family members who have serious mental illness as well as co-occurring addiction. On behalf of NAMI NH, I am here to testify in support of HB 610 about alternative treatments.

There is considerable research demonstrating the link between depression and chronic pain. It has been NAMI NH's long-standing position that there should be "no wrong door" to seeking help or treatment for any mental health or addictive disorder. Likewise for pain and or physical conditions. There is a great need for alternative and/or complementary treatments beyond just the medical model of medications or office-based therapy and treatment. Therefore, we support the use of chiropractic, physical therapy, occupational therapy, acupuncture, massage therapy, and/or osteopathic manipulation as presented in this bill. We also support the amendment regarding use of yoga and yoga therapy.

There is a considerable body of research showing the therapeutic benefits to yoga and yoga therapy. I am more familiar with the research on yoga and yoga therapies as it relates to mental illness particularly for conditions including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Anxiety and Depression. Despite the research on the effectiveness of yoga, yoga therapy, and meditation, these alternative treatment modalities are often overlooked for treatment of pain, addiction or mental health conditions. One notable exception to this is the Veterans Administration which has promoted the use of yoga and meditation for physical as well as psychological injury and addictive disorders.

NAMI NH believes that alternative therapies are important paths to wellness and recovery for many different conditions. Therefore, we are asking you to support HB 610 as well as the amendment to HB 610 regarding yoga and yoga therapy and vote it as ought to pass.

I am happy to answer any questions which you may have.

Respectfully,

Kenneth Norton LICSW  
Executive Director

*Find Help, Find Hope*

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