

January 23, 2025

Honorable Chairman Wayne MacDonald  
House Health, Human Services and Elderly Affairs Committee  
Legislative Office Building Room 201  
33 N State St., Concord, NH 03301

RE: NAMI NH Support for HB 72

Chairman MacDonald and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Holly Stevens, and I am the Director of Public Policy at NAMI New Hampshire, the National Alliance on Mental Illness. NAMI NH is a non-profit, grassroots organization whose mission is to improve the lives of all people impacted by mental illness and suicide through support, education and advocacy. On behalf of NAMI NH, I am here today testifying in support of HB 72, relative to extending the commission to study telehealth services.

The commission to study telehealth services began meeting in 2020 pursuant to HB 1623 of the same year. I have served as the representative from a nonprofit social services organization representing the patient perspective. Several times, the commission was presented with claims data regarding telehealth visits. This data showed that “mental health psychotherapists and substance use counselors provide approximately half of their client services via telehealth.”<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the data showed that 80-90% of telehealth visits were for mental health or substance misuse.<sup>2</sup>

In its recommendations, the commission found “that telehealth continues to be a valuable tool for the delivery of healthcare services, particularly in mental health services and the treatment of substance use disorders” and “that telehealth is a particularly beneficial in the treatment of infectious diseases by providing timely care that can allow treatment to begin earlier in the course of the illness.” The commission recognized that

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<sup>1</sup> Final Report of the Commission to Study Telehealth Services dated November 26, 2024.

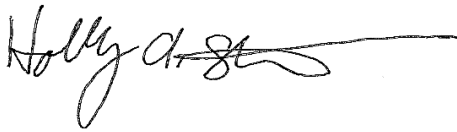
<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

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the “adoption and effective use of telehealth is still an evolving process” and as a result recommended that the commission be extended for another two years to continue its work in determining if any other statutory or regulatory changes are needed to facilitate the use of telehealth services in New Hampshire. For these reasons, NAMI NH recommends that the committee vote HB 72 ought to pass.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holly A. Stevens", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Holly A. Stevens, Esq.