

PASSLEY CONSULTING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

10015 Old Columbia Road – Suite B-215

Columbia, MD 21046

Ph (410) 312-7633 Fax (877) 678-4563

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Dear Legislators,

My name is Dr. Josef Passley and I am a licensed psychotherapist, current University of Baltimore faculty instructor and former Johns Hopkins faculty associate. I have been practicing psychotherapy for the past twenty years and own a private practice in Columbia, Maryland. I am writing in support of House Bill 447, and Senate Bill 475- bills relating to an insurance mandate for Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcus (PANDAS). In the course of my practice, I have treated several patients with PANDAS. It is unfortunately a debilitating medical condition that is not well understood by the majority of the medical community. PANDAS presents unique challenges to psychotherapists in that it is a condition that presents as a mental health problem but has an underlying medical cause.

As a licensed psychotherapist, there is not much one can do for a PANDAS patient until the medical side is addressed. The patient can seek services from my practice for therapy, however, not until the inflammation in their brain subsides, the patient is not able to benefit much from psychotherapy. However, from my experiences once the medical side has been addressed, psychotherapy can be very beneficial to children affected by this condition. I have seen great progress among my PANDAS patients, however only in those who are receiving adequate medical care along with psychotherapy. The aforementioned supports why the HB-447 and SB-475 bills are so important. I have seen throughout the years the barriers that PANDAS families experience in trying to garner adequate treatment for their children. While insurance companies have no problem paying for my services, frequently they will not pay for the underlying medical treatments necessary for the child to recover from this particular condition. Consequently, this lack of coverage makes it arduous and onerous for PANDAS families to access or afford medical treatments for their children which in turn makes my job more challenging. In sum, I am in full support of the HB 447 and SB 475 bill and look forward to collaborating with the medical community and helping more patients and families affected by PANDAS. If you have any further questions please feel free to contact me.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josef Passley', written in a cursive style.

Josef Passley, Ph.D.
Licensed Psychotherapist

