

February 5, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of Senate Bill SB541/2020, Mental Health-Involuntary Admissions-Procedures, specifically the addition of Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners (NP-PMH) to join with physicians in the ability to assess involuntary patients within 24 hours of admission and testify at Administrative Hearings for the retention of an involuntary patient.

From my perspective, I run a psychiatric practice, Windrush Behavioral Health and have myself and my staff working in psychiatric hospitals. We are one of several practices that do work inpatient, however I would say that most psychiatrists do outpatient office based work, and my practice is in the minority in this regard. None the less, I have extensive experience working in inpatient psychiatry, both clinically and administratively. Administratively, I am the Medical Director of Windrush that includes five psychiatrists and multiple NPs in community hospital inpatient psychiatry settings in Baltimore City and Baltimore County.

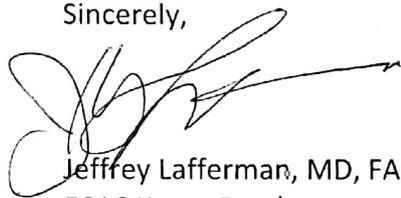
My support for Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners in the involuntary admission process is based on my experience with many involuntary patient scenarios. Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners have the experience of handling very difficult patients with great expertise, giving relief through excellent care. In many cases, the Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner is the provider with the best knowledge and relationship

the involuntary admission process, using each provider's strengths and experience, not regulation, to assign care.

Lastly, I object to the arguments by other Psychiatrists that Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners are not up to the job. That is just not true and has been demonstrated in multiple clinical cases in many inpatient settings that Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners are safe and effective providers. I believe that instead of having a turf battle, we should work together, using our different skills and personal experiences to better care for our patients.

In summary, I am in support of House Bill 317, adding Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners to the Involuntary Admission Procedures. Thank you for taking the time to read my input into this matter. For that I am immensely grateful. If I can be of any further assistance in this matter, please do not hesitate to email me, jlafferman@windrushbehavioralhealth.com or call 443-286-3026.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JLafferman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey Lafferman, MD, FAPA
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Reisterstown, MD 21136