
From: Phil Neuenfeldt [mailto:pneuenfeldt@wisafcio.org]
Sent: Wednesday, April 14, 2010 12:25 PM
Subject: Support for Wisconsin Parity Act

To: Members of the Assembly
From: Phil Neuenfeldt, Secretary-Treasurer
Date: April 14, 2010

Re: **Support for Wisconsin Parity Act**

We ask your support for the Wisconsin Parity Act as passed by the Senate, without further amendments that will undermine the benefits of this legislation.

Parity in health coverage for mental health and substance abuse disorders is long overdue. Current mental health insurance coverage is based on long discarded medical views that dismissed any relationship between mind and body. Today we know they are inseparable—the brain influences all sorts of physiological processes and biological factors can influence mental disorders. This makes good cost sense as well because of the increased long-term costs to the health care system resulting from illnesses of any kind that go untreated.

People want to be productive members of the workforce and contribute to our society. The ability to hold a job and take home a paycheck contributes to an individual's sense of well being which aids in maintaining mental health. Health insurance coverage that promotes the early and effective treatment of mental illness and substance abuse will allow an individual to continue to be a productive member of the workforce. This benefits employers as well because it will reduce absenteeism and avoid the substantial costs that are associated with the replacement of skilled and experienced employees who did not receive the treatment they needed and deserved.

The Wisconsin Parity Act represents a huge step forward in how our society should view health care and we urge your support.

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