April 18, 2017

Technical Review Committee
Psychology Prescribing Application
c/o Ron Briel, Program Manager
Licensure Unit, Division of Public Health
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
Lincoln, Nebraska

Dear Committee Members:

I am a psychiatrist with over 40 years of psychiatric practice experience in Public and Private Sector as well as at Magis Clinic catering to the need of indigent homeless population with mental illness, substance use disorder, legal issues and multiple medical problems. Because of my work in serving the vulnerable citizens of the State of Nebraska I am committed to the best psychiatric care anywhere for all citizens of the State who need of Psychaitric help. Because of my back ground and my commitment to the safe, quality and effective care of the citizens of my State I strongly oppose granting prescriptive privileges to Nebraska psychologists.

As a matter of fact psychologists have limited background in biomedical and neuroscience education and training. All my academic life of 40 plus years I have been a teacher and trainer for clinical psychopharmacology for my medical students, psychiatry and primary care residents. I know that the neuropharmacological underpinning of psychiatric drugs requires extensive education and training in physical medicine as well as neurosciences. I share with my students extensive information about clinical psychopharmacology. In my judgment writing a prescription is easy. However, the complexity is to pick the right medication for right individual with multiple medical issues and monitoring drug-drug, drug-disease, drug-food interactions as well effect on body systems and side effects, at times serious with tragic outcome. Lack of appropriate and extensive education and training in this area is a recipe for patient harm. As leaders in the state of Nebraska certainly
you don’t want our citizens to be exposed to poor quality care due to proposed limited amount of education and training by psychologists.

As you know, to be a physician it requires, as an under graduate education for 4 years. During that span of time they master the many courses in biological sciences. After entering medical school students go through vigorous education and training about all human systems like heart, brain, heart, lungs, musculoskeletal systems etc. Graduation from medical school prepares them to enter residency training say for psychiatry for another 4 years where they accumulate depth and breadth of knowledge and skills in managing mental illness with medication as well as through multidisciplinary approach. In summary in preparation to be a psychiatrist a clinician invests 12 years of their life in learning the art and science for the care of the mentally ill.

As proposed narrow and limited training by psychologists as a preparation to prescribe psychotropic medications is short sighted and is even pale in comparison to psychiatric nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

In light of above information and in the interest of protecting the vulnerable and even helpless citizens of our state I will strongly urge you to carefully review the proposal by psychologist and vote against it. We certainly don’t want to sacrifice safe, quality care for our citizens. Your positive consideration of my request will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

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