

9/22/20

Senator McColley

Senate Transportation, Commerce & Workforce Committee

re: SB238 Music and Art Therapy Licensure in the state of Ohio

Dear Senator McColley,

Our rural Ohio health system has had the wonderful opportunity to see, first hand, the benefits of music therapy with our Geriatric-Psychiatric population.

Music therapy interventions provided by our music therapist have enhanced memory, improved communication, and provided unique opportunities for interaction with our patients who are often resistive to other interventions.

Our music therapist provides carefully thought out, structured, individualized music therapy experiences that have a positive impact on the mood and emotional states of our patients. We have seen reduced depression in our Gero-Psych population, as well as a decrease in the frequency of agitated and aggressive behaviors. We have seen, first-hand how these music therapy experiences enhance our patients' social and emotional skills and decrease problem behaviors. This provides not only a safe and therapeutic hospital experience for our patients, but safer work conditions for our staff who must interact with these behaviors.

The work of a music therapist is not just to provide the music. Much like any other healthcare professional, it takes proper training and credentials to be qualified to provide music therapy services. We support their efforts to gain official state recognition of the music therapy profession and the MT-BC credential required for competent practice. When individualized music experiences are designed by a professionally trained music therapist, this provides a therapeutic treatment plan to work collaboratively with our other interdisciplinary approaches to improve the functioning of our patients and contribute to their quality of life. We advocate for creating licensing requirements for the practice of music therapy and require the State Medical Board to license and regulate music therapists.

Respectfully,

Kate Hartwig, RN, BSN | Risk Management and Safety Coordinator

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