

May 15, 2018.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Veda Warriar MD, I am a psychiatrist working at Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare which is the state psychiatric hospital in Columbus. We serve patients with severe mental illness and substance use disorders. During the year 2016, TVBH served about 1800 patients from in and around Central Ohio. We have both acute care and forensic units at TVBH and currently have art therapists working diligently with both these patient populations on daily basis.

In addition to the medical needs our patient population require significant support in terms of developing coping skills and managing life stress. Patients are provided with opportunity to work with psychologist, music therapists and art therapists, titled as adjunctive therapists, while admitted to TVBH. Based on my experience of working with the patient population that TVBH serves for more than eight years, it is very clear to me that the role of these therapeutic measures are irreplaceable. We see patients who would not otherwise communicate with providers, either due to their psychosis symptoms or anxiety, using art to express their thoughts and communicate more effectively. Art is also used as a healthy coping strategy by many of our patients who have never mastered simple skills to deal with stressful situations in life. TVBH serves many patients who stay for long periods of time in the hospital and we see those patients developing skills like planning, working in a group and collaborating with others and working towards a common goal, while they work on long term art projects which are proudly displayed in our hospital halls. These are very essential skills for our patients especially for those who have been in hospital setting for prolonged periods and slowly transitioning to the community.

I have treated many patients who have indicated to me how beneficial it was for them to have the opportunity to work with art therapists while they are in the hospital. As a physician I communicate and obtain feedback from the art therapists on a daily basis and I consider this feedback very valuable in my decision making. I am in support of licensure for art therapists.

Sincerely,

Veda Warriar M D

Staff Psychiatrist,

Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare,

2200 W Broad St, Columbus, OH 43223.

(614) 752-0333.