



## Mental Health Association in New York State, Inc.

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### Memorandum in Support

S.4078 (Breslin)/A.3009 (Quart)

*AN ACT* to amend the insurance law, in relation to synchronization of multiple prescriptions

The Mental Health Association in New York State (MHANYS), representing 26 Mental Health Association affiliates serving the mental health needs of New Yorkers in 50 counties supports S.4078 (Breslin)/A.3009 (Quart), which would provide for the insurance coverage of the synchronization of multiple prescriptions and dispensing fee standardization.

According to a 2017 JAMA Internal Medicine report one in six American adults reported filling one or more prescriptions for psychiatric drugs in 2013. Among adults reporting taking psychiatric drugs, more than 8 of 10 reported long-term use. Treatment compliance for this population is extremely important for recovery from mental illness. Prescription synchronization increases the likelihood of consistent compliance. A growing number of studies support the benefits of prescription synchronization as more and more states adopt this practice. One study showed that synchronized medication refill schedules were associated with better medication adherence, particularly for patients filling maintenance medications exclusively at retail pharmacies. These benefits accrue primarily because synchronized dispensing eliminates the inconvenience of multiple trips to the pharmacy.

In addition, many people taking medication for their mental health condition(s) are also taking medication for chronic physical health issues as well. Co-occurrence of mental and general medical disorders is among the most common and disabling combinations, with approximately 30% of individuals with comorbidity having both a mental and a physical disorder. This coexistence of mental and physical conditions often results in the need to juggle multiple medications with differing refill dates.

As mental health advocates MHANYS supports public policy that is conducive to recovery and this includes the synchronization of prescriptions. For this reason we strongly support S.4078/A.3009 and urge the Legislature to join the more than 23 other states that have passed similar legislation.

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