



## **New York State Society for Clinical Social Work, Inc.**

Tel: (800) 288-4279; Email: [info.nysscsw@gmail.com](mailto:info.nysscsw@gmail.com); Fax: (718) 785-9582

Website: [www.nysscsw.org](http://www.nysscsw.org); Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NYSSCSW/info](https://www.facebook.com/NYSSCSW/info)

### **\*\*SAVE THE LCSW\*\***

For those of you who called your legislators, thank you. For those of you who haven't yet, read the following improved alert and please please, please call.

Marsha Wineburgh, DSW, LCSW-R Legislative chair.

For the last several years, a bill to mandate insurance reimbursement for mental health services provided by individuals licensed under Article 163 of the Education Law - Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Creative Arts Therapists and Licensed Psychoanalysts has been introduced into both houses. While, on the surface, this idea is not unreasonable, there is a huge clinical experience discrepancy and as such, we, along with Psychiatrists and Psychologists have opposed the measure.

Currently, the only clinicians that insurance is REQUIRED to reimburse for mental health services are a Psychiatrist (MD), Psychologist (PhD) and an LCSW who has an additional three years of supervised experience in the provision of diagnosis and psychotherapy in addition to the three years required for licensure as an LCSW (known as the "R" provision). On the other hand, Article 163 licensees postgraduate training requires only a fraction of such experience. Nor can they diagnose a serious mental illness or treat without referral to a physician. Requiring insurance to reimburse such providers but NOT LCSW's, is unacceptable and lowers competence for private practice.

Despite this glaring inequity, the bills are on the move. The Assembly version is on the Codes Agenda this week. As such, We have STRONGLY SUGGESTED amendments to STRIKE PROVISIONS REQUIRING THE THREE ADDITIONAL YEARS OF EXPERIENCE FOR REIMBURSEMENT for LCSWs, but thus far, they have been ignored. We must protect our profession! There are only three weeks left of this legislative session and this battle will require teamwork from now until June 19th. It will require constant internal legislative work and a loud constituent outcry!

We have an easy three-step process of engagement

1). If you don't know who your Senate or Assembly Member is, log onto...<https://www.elections.ny.gov/district-map/district-map.html>

Simply fill in your address and click on Senate and Assembly to reveal your members.

2). Take five minutes out of your day to CALL YOUR SENATE AND ASSEMBLY MEMBER using the script provided below. The Senate Switchboard # is 518-455-2800. The Assembly Switchboard is 518-455-4100 **At first glance, staffers may tell you the current law already includes the LCSW - you must tell them to keep reading to the next line where it requires such LCSW's to have an**

**additional three years of experience as this is where the egregious discrepancy between providers, exists.**

3). When you are done...let your organization know you've made your call ([mwineburgh@gmail.com](mailto:mwineburgh@gmail.com)) and share this alert with as many Clinical Social Workers and those working toward LCSW licensure.

Please utilize the following Script:

**Hello. My name is ----- and I am a constituent who is VERY concerned about Assembly Bill 670 (Bronson) and Senate Bill 6212 (Senator Kennedy). While the bills are not yet identical, we expect they soon will be. Each of them will require insurance providers to reimburse for mental health services provided by individuals licensed under Article 163 of the Education Law - Licensed Mental Health Counselors, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, Licensed Creative Arts Therapists and Licensed Psychoanalysts BUT NOT LCSW's who have MUCH HIGHER EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS. I am asking you as a constituent to honor my education and experience and protect my livelihood by amending the bill by striking subparagraph D, which requires LCSW's to have an additional three years of experience in order to receive reimbursement. While the LCSW-R is the highest level licensure, an LCSW without the additional requirements is by authority of statute, already authorized and qualified to independently provide diagnosis, assessment based treatment planning and psychotherapy and as such, should be reimbursed for such work!**