

Jason Brame

From: Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative [jasonb@communityadvocates.net]
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2009 9:51 AM
To: Jason Brame
Subject: MATI ALERT: Public Hearing at State Capitol Regarding Parity Legislation -- Wednesday, Oct. 28



e-Newsletter

In This Issue

Oct. 21, 2009

ALERT: Assembly Committee to Hold Public Hearing on Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Parity, Wednesday, Oct. 28

Oct. 28

Wisconsin Warrior Summit: Thursday, Oct. 22

Upcoming MATI Committee Meetings

Program and Policy Committee

• **Time, location TBD.**
 Contact: Hilary Chavez, (414) 270-2950.

Upcoming MATI Work Group Meetings

Communications

• **Wed., Nov. 4, 9-10 a.m.**
 (Location: Springfield College, 744 N. 4th St., Ste 300) Contact: [Hilary Chavez](#), (414) 270-2950.

ALERT: Assembly Committee to Hold Public Hearing on Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Parity, Wednesday, Oct. 28

On Wednesday, Oct. 28, the Wisconsin Assembly Committee on Health and Healthcare Reform will hold a public hearing regarding the *Wisconsin Mental Health and Substance Abuse Parity Act*, LRB 09-3406/2-LRB 09-3614/1. This legislation, co-sponsored by Sen. Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) and Rep. Sandy Pasch (D-Whitefish Bay), would require all group health plans in Wisconsin to provide mental health and substance abuse disorder benefits at parity levels.

The hearing will be on **Wednesday, Oct. 28, in Room 417 North of the State Capitol.** Though organizers have not set a time, we anticipate the hearing to start around 11 a.m. This will be the first public hearing on mental



Advocacy

· Time, location TBD. Contact: [Genyne Edwards](#), (414) 270-2952.

System Redesign

· Time, location TBD. Contact: [Robert Cherry](#), (414) 270-2953.

Resources

[MATI Web Site](#)

[MATI Blog](#)

[Closing the Addiction Treatment Gap \(Open Society Institute\)](#)

[Community Advocates Public Policy Institute](#)

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health and substance abuse parity legislation in the history of the Wisconsin State Assembly.

The Community Advocates Public Policy Institute and the Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative strongly support the *Wisconsin Parity Act*. The legislation has backing on the Committee on Health and Healthcare Reform; however, its passage is far from certain, and we need people to support it. Here's how you can help:

- **Testify at the hearing.** We need men and women who can testify to the effectiveness of mental health and addiction treatment, as well as the cost benefits for small employers of providing parity-level treatment. Testimony should last 3-5 minutes. If you are interested in testifying, please contact Jason Brame, Community Advocates Public Policy Institute, at (414) 270-2951 or email by Friday, Oct. 23 at jasonb@communityadvocates.net.

We encourage all advocates who care about this issue to attend the hearing. If you are unable to attend the hearing you may submit written testimony to the Committee Chair, Rep. Jon Richards (rep.richards@legis.wisconsin.gov):

118-N State Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-8953

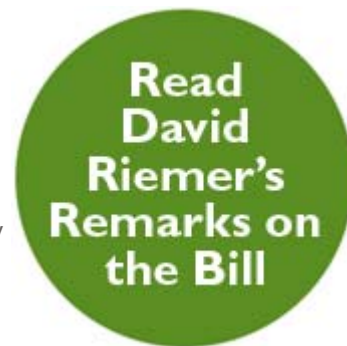
- **Contact your legislator serving on the Assembly Committee on Health and Healthcare Reform and share your story and position on this legislation.**

Find your legislators [here](#). Committee members are:

- Rep. Jon Richards, Milwaukee
rep.richards@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-3404
- Rep. Chuck Benedict, Beloit
rep.benedict@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-9967
- Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber, Appleton
rep.BernardSchaber@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-3070
- **Rep. Sandy Pasch, Whitefish Bay, rep.pasch@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-7671. Rep. Pasch is the lead sponsor of the bill. If you contact her, please be sure to thank her for her important leadership.**
- Rep. Kelda Helen Roys, Madison
rep.roys@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-5340
- Rep. Donna Seidel, Wausau
rep.seidel@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-0654
- Rep. Jennifer Shilling, LaCrosse
rep.shilling@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-5680

- Rep. Amy Sue Vruwink, Milladon
rep.vruwink@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-8366
 - Rep. John Nygren, Marinette
rep.nygren@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-2343
 - Rep. Rhoades, Hudson
rep.rhoades@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-1526
 - Rep. Stone, Greendale
rep.stone@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-8590
 - Rep. Pat Strachota, West Bend
rep.strachota@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-264-8486
 - Rep. Leah Vukmir, Wauwatosa
rep.vukmir@legis.wisconsin.gov; 608-266-9180
- **Contact your legislators to advocate for passage.** This legislation is virtually identical to parity bills introduced in previous sessions, with certain added features specifically designed to fill in the gap created following enactment of the the federal *Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008*, P.L. 110-343.

The *Wellstone-Domenici Act* applies to group health plans that include mental health or substance abuse treatment benefits offered by large employers of 51 or more employees. This *Act*, however, fails to provide parity protection for smaller employers of 50 or fewer employees -- potentially impacting more than 700,000 people in Wisconsin.



The *Wisconsin Parity Act* will act to close this gap in coverage, increasing mental health and substance abuse treatment, saving lives and lowering costs. For more information about the *Wisconsin Parity Act*, visit www.ParityForWisconsin.org.

Wisconsin Warrior Summit: Thursday, Oct. 22

Summit Examines Mental Health Needs of Veterans and Programs in Place to Support Them

The Wisconsin Warrior Summit is a conference for mental health professionals, community organizations, veterans, and their families "Helping the veteran and their family who survived the war, survive the peace..." The Summit is dedicated to coordinating a comprehensive community response to the mental health needs of

veterans and their families.

Through keynotes and breakout sessions, which will feature the voices and perspectives of veterans themselves, the Summit will inform clinical professionals, veterans and their families, as well as community social service organizations and the general public on the needs of veterans and their families, and the treatment and programs in place to support them.

The Summit will be held from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 22, at the Milwaukee County War Memorial (750 N. Lincoln Memorial Dr.). For more information or to register, visit www.WIWarriorProject.org.

Sessions include:

- Legal and Criminal Issues for Veterans
- The Warrior and Addiction (Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse)
- Challenges Facing the Warrior: Homelessness, Financial, Housing, and Employment
- Death of a Warrior: How a Family Copes
- Warrior on Deployment: Support for Vets and Family
- Peacekeepers from the Front Line to the Blue Line: Law Enforcement Officers Called to Deployment
- Soul Wound, Warrior Spirit: A First Nations Perspective on Healing the Injuries of Warfare
- The Woman Warrior
- Reclaiming Life After War: Building Resilience
- Recognizing Changes: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, Suicide and Pain
- Treating Stress Disorders: Current (and Future) Treatments
- Military Families: Navigating the Road Home

The Wisconsin Warrior Project is a collaborative effort designed to engage veterans groups, community organizations, mental health professionals and the general public in learning about the mental health and other issues facing veterans and their families and providing direction in continuing to disseminate this information to the larger community. The Wisconsin Warrior Summit is the initial step in this effort.

The Summit is sponsored by Dry Hooch: A Place for Veterans to Reconnect, Mental Health America of Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, Disability Rights Wisconsin and Easter Seals Disability Services.

The Milwaukee Addiction Treatment Initiative (MATI) is a collaboration among local stakeholders -- including treatment providers, public health agencies, law enforcement, faith-based agencies, advocates and members of the recovery community -- to close the addiction treatment gap in Milwaukee County and ensure that everyone who needs treatment can receive it. MATI is sponsored by a grant from the Open Society Institute, Baltimore, with additional funding from the Helen Bader Foundation, the Zilber Family Foundation and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. Visit MATI online at www.ca-mati.org.

MATI is a project of the Community Advocates Public Policy Institute.

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