

February 14, 2023

Testimony for the 2024 NEW YORK STATE EXECUTIVE BUDGET for HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

My name is Carla Schorr Rose, MA, LCAT, ATR-BC, and I worked as a Creative Arts Therapist at The Children's Hospital at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx, NY, where I was a member of SEIU 1199 for 12 years from 2007-2019.

I am grateful to the Governor and legislature for the increased attention to the mental health needs of New Yorkers and the shortage of therapists to care for them. Our treatment team is interdisciplinary and includes social workers, MDs, NPs, psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists and Child Life Specialists.

Montefiore currently employs several Licensed Creative Arts Therapists who work on the front lines of our mental health crisis.

I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself and our organization due to urgent concern that the proposed Health and Mental Hygiene Bill Part Q be amended to include LCATs, who are currently providing essential mental health care to many of our most vulnerable New Yorkers. There is a great need and we have heard that there are not enough providers working with Medicaid consumers. LCATs have experience with this population and can immediately help close the gap in care.

Excluding nearly 2000 licensed providers undermines the state's ability to solve the current crisis.

The Children's Hospital at Montefiore deeply values the front line psychotherapy services our LCATs provide to our patients and their families, many of whom struggle with emotional and psychological problems stemming from life threatening diagnoses. I have used Art Therapy with the Palliative Care Team working with patients during end of life care, in the oncology and dialysis units during infusions, running parent and sibling support groups and sponsoring events in the hospital to raise awareness of Creative Arts Therapies. I have also been a presenter at a Pediatric Palliative Care conference held at Montefiore.

LCATs have specialized skills and training in providing psychotherapy to those who are not effectively served by talk therapy methods. This includes people from different cultures, non-English speakers, BIPOC, and LGBTQI+ communities. Creative arts therapists are often the first responders after events of unspeakable traumas like mass violence and natural disasters, in working with young children exposed to violence and abuse, and with youth and adults, including veterans who have PTSD.

Please include these highly qualified, highly effective existing mental health professionals in this very important bill.

Sincerely,

Carla S. Rose, MA, LCAT, ATR-BC

NY State Licensed and Registered Board Certified Creative Arts Therapist