



Davenport Creative Arts Therapy, PLLC
6 East 39th street, suite 602
New York, NY 10016

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

My name is Emily Davenport and I am the Founder and Clinical Director at Davenport Creative Arts Therapy, PLLC in Manhattan. I'm a Licensed Creative Arts Therapist with 13-years of experience working in inpatient, outpatient, day treatment, community and private mental health settings. Our team is composed of 7 LCATs (Licensed Creative Arts Therapists) and 2 graduate-level interns who work on the front lines of our mental health crisis.

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. Creative Arts Therapists also have the unique ability to reach "high-risk" and "unreachable" clients who are too often referred to higher-levels of care, or deemed treatment resistant.

Top-down traditional talk therapy doesn't work for everyone. LCATs have specialized skills and training in providing psychotherapy to those who are not effectively served by talk therapy methods. Emerging research highlights the importance of somatic bottom-up approaches to trauma treatment encompassing creative arts therapies. Unlike talk therapies, Creative Arts Therapies endeavors to undo trauma's imprint on the body by directly accessing the limbic system, and targeting sensory receptors throughout the body. Limiting access to alternative trauma-informed resources like Creative Arts Therapy perpetuates re-traumatization, and the "revolving door" approach to mental healthcare.

We at Davenport Creative Arts Therapy understand this, and deeply value the front line psychotherapy services our LCATs provide to our clients. Over the past four-years, our practice has served over 600+ children, teens and adults-many of whom were deemed "high-risk". In that time, I can count on one-hand how many times we've had to hospitalize a client. Through Art Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy interventions, we continue to provide successful life-affirming mental health care to hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations.



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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. 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 add LCATs who are currently providing front line mental health care to 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 can immediately help close the gap in care, if you let us.

Excluding nearly 2000 licensed providers undermines the state's ability to solve the current crisis. Please include these highly-qualified, highly-effective mental health professionals in this very important bill.

Sincerely,

Emily Davenport, M.A., ATR-BC, LCAT