HOUSE DOCKET, NO. 2770 FILED ON: 1/19/2023

HOUSE . . . . . No. 1075

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Michael P. Kushmerek

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act ensuring support groups are part of the pathway of care following the annual mental health wellness exam.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
Michael P. Kushmerek	*3rd Worcester*	*1/19/2023*
Lindsay N. Sabadosa	*1st Hampshire*	*2/9/2023*
Carol A. Doherty	*3rd Bristol*	*2/20/2023*
James J. O'Day	*14th Worcester*	*2/21/2023*
Rodney M. Elliott	*16th Middlesex*	*2/27/2023*
Carole A. Fiola	*6th Bristol*	*3/30/2023*
Joan B. Lovely	*Second Essex*	*6/22/2023*

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By Representative Kushmerek of Fitchburg, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1075) of Michael P. Kushmerek and others relative to ensuring support groups are part of the pathway of care following annual mental health wellness exams. Financial Services.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court
(2023-2024)

An Act ensuring support groups are part of the pathway of care following the annual mental health wellness exam.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 47TT of Chapter 175, as appearing in the Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting in subsection (a) after the words “interviews and questions” the following paragraph:

A list of appropriate resources for treatment shall be compiled and updated annually by the department of mental health. The list shall be required to be distributed to an individual at the time of the mental health wellness examination, in both paper and electronic formats. The list shall be reviewed and updated annually by the department.

SECTION 2. Section 47TT of Chapter 175, as appearing in the Official Edition, is hereby further amended by inserting at the end thereof the following subsections:

(d) If a patient receives a mental health diagnosis resulting from the annual mental health wellness examination, the provider must at that time provide a referral for the patient to seek

follow up care. This referral must be for a treatment option that can be accessed within six weeks of the time of the examination. The referral could include but not be limited to individualized didactic talk therapy or to an evidence-based support group. (e) The executive office of health and human services shall annually assess the behavioral healthcare workforce and resources available for treatment referrals and identify any existing gaps. This shall include an analysis of the number of referrals to treatment made as a result of the annual mental health wellness exam, as well as the number of referrals successfully accessed and through which specific treatment was received. Such data shall be anonymized and aggregated to ensure that individual patient outcomes would be kept confidential and not shared in any circumstance. The results of this report shall be submitted annually by March 1st to the house and senate committee on ways and means as well as the joint committee on mental health.

(f) As part of ensuring access to adequate behavioral healthcare, the state shall build upon the network of community behavioral health centers and shall establish, subject to appropriation, a network of evidence-based support groups that shall increase access to behavioral healthcare services following from referrals made as part of the annual mental health wellness examination.