

# MaineHealth

## MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community  
Health Network  
LincolnHealth  
MaineHealth Care At Home  
Maine Behavioral Healthcare  
Memorial Hospital  
Maine Medical Center  
Mid Coast-Parkview Health  
NorDx  
Pen Bay Medical Center  
Southern Maine Health Care  
Synernet  
Waldo County General Hospital  
Western Maine Health

## Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable  
Care Organization

## MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health  
New England Rehabilitation  
Hospital of Portland  
St. Mary's Health System

**Sarah Calder, MaineHealth**

## **Testimony in Opposition to LD 1582**

### **“An Act to Enact the Maine Psilocybin Services Act”**

**Monday, February 7, 2022**

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Sarah Calder, Director of Government Affairs at MaineHealth, and I am here today to testify in opposition to LD 1582, “An Act to Enact the Maine Psilocybin Services Act.”

MaineHealth is a non-profit health care system that provides the full continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. As part of our mission of “Working Together So Maine’s Communities are the Healthiest in America,” MaineHealth is committed to creating a seamless system of behavioral healthcare across Maine, coordinating hospital psychiatric care with community-based treatment services, and better access to behavioral healthcare through integration with primary care services.

MaineHealth has significant concerns that the legislation before you today blurs the lines between recreational use and psilocybin-assisted psychotherapy, and does not include the appropriate regulations to ensure safety. Importantly, while early research shows promise for the use of “psychedelic” treatments, like psilocybin and methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA) to treat patients with depression and suicidal ideation, the research is ongoing and not currently approved by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Further, if the purpose of this legislation is to treat mental and behavioral health needs, the treatment should be administered by trained and qualified providers, with appropriate clinical oversight. The criteria – a high school diploma and a criminal background check – for who can become a “psilocybin service facilitator” are alarming. Oftentimes, individuals who seek out psilocybin for therapeutic treatment have experienced severe trauma. It would be extraordinarily dangerous for an individual without a clinical background and training in trauma-informed therapy to offer services to this vulnerable population. Additionally, the legislation lacks sufficient provisions to protect individuals who suffer from thought disorders (such as schizophrenia) or who have histories of psychotic episodes from the dangers of psilocybin. Psilocybin can induce psychosis in these individuals and “psilocybin service facilitators” will not be equipped to manage clients who become psychotic.

We look forward to continued research on the use of psychedelic treatments to treat behavioral health needs and substance use disorder. Should the FDA approve psilocybin to treat such disorders, we look forward to collaborating

with the medical community to ensure such treatment is safely administered in Maine.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.