



Providence Community Acupuncture

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The Honorable Susan R. Donovan, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services
State House
Providence, RI 02903

March 13, 2024

Re: 2024- H7626- An Act Relating to Businesses and Professions- The Practice of Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine

Dear Chair Donovan and Honorable Members of the Health and Human Services Committee,

I would like to submit this letter of testimony in **strong support for H7626** a bill relating to the use of a 5-Needle ear acupuncture protocol also known as 5NP or the NADA protocol. In 2021, a similar bill was passed by the General Assembly allowing the use of 5NP by LICSW, LMHC, LCDP, Peer Recovery Counselors, and nurses once they completed a specific training. This statutory change has generated great interest in using 5NP for a range of conditions and in a variety of settings. 5NP helps to address the effects of toxic stress, trauma, chronic pain, addiction, anxiety, depression, insomnia, and supports people in recovery.

The purpose of this current amendment is in direct response to 2 things that came to light since the we began training non-acupuncturists to use 5NP 3 years ago:

1. Certain licensed professionals were inadvertently left out during the previous effort to get this law passed. Clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFT), Physician's Assistants (PA), Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), trauma response and de-escalation teams, and community health workers are not yet permitted to use 5NP. We have heard from a number of Rhode Islanders practicing under the licenses/designations listed above that they would like to be able to use 5NP in their work.
2. We cannot fully predict or understand the ways that 5NP may be of use in the future. Rather than continuing to amend the law and approach each profession's statute separately, we are suggesting language that is broad enough to encompass future innovations and applications for 5NP to benefit not only people struggling with mental or behavioral health or addiction issues, but for all Rhode

Islanders.

5NP is currently offered, via student health services, at URI, RIC, JWU, Brown and RISD. Organizations that offer addiction treatment and recovery services, like CODAC, VISTA, STAR, Ad Care, and WellOne, are utilizing 5NP now and have staff who are able to provide it onsite due to the new legislation. An Ob-Gyn resident at Women & Infants Hospital is studying how the use of 5NP for early labor emergency room visits might impact the need for stronger medication and interventions.

Many studies cite use of 5NP in conjunction with behavioral/mental health interventions, or treatment for substance use disorder, and we are not claiming that it is a stand-alone treatment for those issues. However, it is important to note that 5NP is not only used in mental/behavioral health or addiction settings. Because it is inexpensive, easy to deliver, and effective in regulating the nervous system it can be applied in most situations where a person would benefit from relief of mental, physical or emotional stress. 5NP has been used in hospitals, on college campuses, and as an integral part of post-disaster relief efforts after tragedies like 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. The safety record for 5NP ear acupuncture is excellent as well.

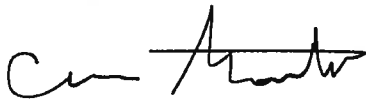
Testimony from providers using 5NP speaks for itself:

Practitioners of the NADA protocol laud it as a nonverbal, non-confrontational, effective, and well-received intervention; [citation](#)

The practice of acudetox has evolved to support substance abuse treatment and recovery, from harm reduction and pretreatment throughout the continuum of care to long-term recovery maintenance; to criminal justice applications from drug courts to jails and prisons; to all manner of substance and process addictions; to primary mental health and more recently chronic pain. [Citation](#)

Why keep this inexpensive, simple, safe, and powerful tool from anyone who could use it to help others? With qualifications set by the completion of an accepted training program, 5NP can reach more people and provide relief, respite, and the kind of slow, incremental shift that produces greater changes in people's lives. Thank you for your time and consideration, and thank you on behalf of the thousands of Rhode Islanders who continue to benefit from this versatile treatment.

Respectfully-



Cris Monteiro, DACM, MSTCM
Doctor of Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine