

(Optional) Your own story:

Many Tennesseans have had problems with getting access to a psychiatrist. If you have experienced problems accessing psychiatric care, and you would like us to share it (anonymously) with the legislators, please briefly summarize it here or attach additional pages:

Horizontal lines for writing a story.

- Fold This Side First -

Wouldn't it be better if your mental health doctor provided **all** your mental health care, **including medications?**

With your support this will soon be possible.



Tennessee Families for Access to Comprehensive Treatment (T-FACT)

Email: tfactorg@aol.com

TENNESSEE FAMILIES FOR ACCESS TO COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT (T-FACT)
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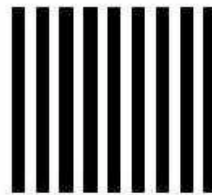
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Dear Fellow Tennessean:

Over the last 20 years we have experienced serious erosion in access to quality mental health care, due to the effects of managed care. Here are the facts:

- The unmet need for mental health care is tremendous, but treatment is often difficult to access and fragmented—causing unnecessary hardships on families and excessive costs
- Often a family member needs BOTH medication AND therapy services, but it takes on average SIX WEEKS TO THREE MONTHS to get an initial appointment with a psychiatrist in Tennessee. There is a severe shortage of psychiatrists in Tennessee, which is projected to continue indefinitely
- The result is that primary care physicians with too little time and too few resources are prescribing nearly 85% of all of the psychotropic medications in our state. These overburdened physicians cannot provide the integrated care we need.

What Can We Do?

The shortage of psychiatrists is both in Tennessee and nationally. Some wish our state legislators could magically come up with millions of dollars in new monies to recapitalize our mental health system so that we can again have the kind of comprehensive care we saw in past decades, but this option will not happen.

Best solution: Integrated care

What is needed in today's world of rising mental health needs and limited dollars are new alternatives for providing cost-effective and integrated mental health care. I am writing to you about just such an alternative: PRESCRIBING PSYCHOLOGISTS.

Under legislation introduced this year, PRESCRIBING PSYCHOLOGISTS would be able to provide both medication and therapy services—which will significantly improve access to comprehensive care across our state. Prescribing psychologists are also trained to collaborate closely with other psychologists to integrate psychotherapy services with medication management.

Therapy and medication are effective

For some emotional or behavioral disorders, psychotherapy is the primary treatment. For other disorders, medication is the primary treatment. But for many conditions, research shows that a carefully coordinated combination of psychological treatment and medication is the best way to achieve lasting improvement.

Prescribing Psychologists are well trained

Psychologists are the most highly trained mental health professionals. They average over seven years of doctoral training specifically in the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and behavioral disorders. PRESCRIBING PSYCHOLOGISTS have completed an additional three years of postdoctoral training in clinical psychopharmacology. They are qualified to manage mental health medications, and trained in potential medication interactions with non-mental health medications. They are also trained in knowing when to refer patients for evaluation of possible non-mental health problems.

We need your help!

As someone with a family member with a mental health problem, I know first hand the difficulties of obtaining access to high quality, integrated mental health care.

We need to pass this legislation authorizing PRESCRIBING PSYCHOLOGISTS—won't you help?

Legislators need to hear from you. By filling out this form, then simply taping this brochure closed and dropping it in the mail back to us, you can add your voice to the many other Tennesseans who support this important legislation. **Thank you!**

Anne McKee, Director

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Yes, I Support Prescribing Psychologists

I support legislation endorsed by Tennessee Families for Access to Comprehensive Treatment (T-FACT) that would authorize prescription privileges for mental health medications for appropriately trained Prescribing Psychologists. I give permission to T-FACT and its lobbyists to use my name with legislators in support of this legislation.

I understand that my name will only be disclosed to legislators and to T-FACT, and that my name will not be used for any other purpose, and that I will not be asked to raise or contribute money.

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time by notifying T-FACT in writing or via e-mail.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No.: _____

Email: _____

- Check this box if you would NOT like to receive further information regarding how you can help support and pass this legislation.