

April 6, 2023

The Honorable Dr. Akilah Weber  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0079  
Tel: (916) 319-2079



**RE: Support for AB 874 (Weber)**

Dear Assembly Member Weber:

Mental Health America of California (MHAC) is pleased to support Assembly 874 (Weber), legislation which would require a health care service plan, health insurance policy, other health coverage carrier, or pharmacy benefit manager that administers pharmacy benefits to apply any amounts paid by the enrollee, insured, or another source pursuant to a discount, repayment, product voucher, or other reduction to the enrollee's or insured's out-of-pocket expenses toward the enrollee's or insured's overall contribution to any out-of-pocket maximum, deductible, copayment, coinsurance, or applicable cost-sharing requirement under the enrollee's or insured's health care service plan, health insurance policy, or other health care coverage.

Mental Health America of California (MHAC) is a peer-run organization that has been leading the state in behavioral health public policy and advocacy since 1957. The mission of MHAC is to ensure that people of all ages, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, language, race, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, spirituality, religion, age or socioeconomic status who require mental health services and supports are able to live full and productive lives, receive the mental health services and other services that they need, and are not denied any other benefits, services, rights, or opportunities based on their need for mental health services.

The rising cost of medical care puts many people in a life-threatening position to refuse services and support out of fear of inability to pay. Even with insurance, the out-of-pocket costs for medication can cause an undue burden. While the use of discounts, product vouchers, and other copay support systems are used to alleviate the financial burden, insurance companies sometimes do not count those forms of payment towards the overall out-of-pocket maximums, forcing the insured to pay more for medicine or services. Assembly Bill 874 will make those indirect copayments count towards the maximum out-of-pocket expenses. This will improve access to medications and remove financial barriers for people with mental health challenges.

For these reasons, we support Assembly Bill 874. If you or your staff have any questions, or if Mental Health America of California can be of any assistance on this or any other behavioral

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health bill, please do not hesitate to contact me at [hstrunk@mhac.org](mailto:hstrunk@mhac.org), or our Interim Director of Public Policy, Karen Vicari at [kvicari@mhacofca.org](mailto:kvicari@mhacofca.org).

In Community,



Heidi Strunk  
President & CEO  
Mental Health America of California