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## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR DRAMA THERAPY

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Diane Brown

May 25, 2012

Mr. Sheldon Silver  
Speaker, District 64, New York State Assembly  
250 Broadway, Suite 2307  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Silver,

We are the National Association for Drama Therapy and we are writing to you on behalf of our members, some whom are Licensed Creative Arts Therapists (LCATs) in New York State. We are writing to advocate against the permanent exemption law, Bill A00214. It has been brought to our attention that Bill A00214 seeks to affirm a permanent exemption for the disciplines of Social Work and Mental Health Practitioners (including Licensed Creative Arts Therapists) from having to be licensed to practice in many of our State's hospitals, agencies, and facilities. Such an action would endanger consumers, who need and deserve services provided by competent, trained, and licensed professionals.

The proposal of a permanent exemption law significantly jeopardizes the quality and standard of care that mental health professionals are ethically and legally bound to provide. As a professional and national association, we foresee costly and negative consequences of such a bill. Most importantly, it will put THE MOST vulnerable populations at unnecessary risk.


- An example of the risks of unlicensed professionals providing clinical service has been well documented recently in a series by New York Times by reporter Danny Hakim, link here: **Abused and Used: A Disabled Boy's Death, and a System in Disarray**
- Another example is found, in a 2007 Quantitative study of ethical violations in the human service professions [http://www.recoverytoday.net/September\\_2008/gallagher.html](http://www.recoverytoday.net/September_2008/gallagher.html) non-licensed professionals like CASAC's (which is a bachelor's level credential) had between a 13% and 26% higher rate of ethical violations than their graduate level trained and licensed counterparts.


Graduate level trained and licensed clinicians have within their scope of practice the assessment, intervention, prevention, treatment planning and delivery skills that Bachelor's training does not provide. When New York State citizens utilize the services that state agencies provide, or are admitted into state hospitals, they need highly qualified, licensed clinicians providing their care. Often consumers within New York State agencies, facilities, and accredited programs are the most vulnerable and in need of superior care, having limited resources to advocate for themselves. Without requiring the proper credentialing and training in professional and ethical competency, the safety and care of these individuals cannot be protected.


Licensure was enacted to protect the public. The NY State Department of Education ensures that practitioners are properly trained. They hold practitioners accountable for providing care that is ethical and does no harm. The New York State government and agencies should continue to act in the best interest of all individuals in need of care, providing the highest quality and the most professional services whenever possible. We ask that that Bill A00214 not be allowed to move forward, and we expect to hear from you shortly regarding this important matter.


Thank you for taking the time to review our concerns.


Sincerely,

  
Nisha Sajnani, PhD, RDT  
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For more information on our organization, please contact us at [nadt.office@nadt.org](mailto:nadt.office@nadt.org)  
For more specific information on the LCAT license in New York State, our fact sheet may be a helpful resource: <http://www.nadt.org/assets/documents/ny-lcat-fact-sheet.pdf>.