

MINUTES
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Thursday, February 27, 2020

TIME: 9:00 A.M.

PLACE: Room EW20

MEMBERS: Chairman Wood, Vice Chairman Wagoner, Representatives Vander Woude, Gibbs, Blanksma, Kingsley, Zollinger, Christensen, Lickley, Remington, Chew, Rubel, Davis

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Representative(s) Zollinger

GUESTS: Matt Kaiserman, Saltzer Health; Dr. Kurt Nilsson and Kristi Pardue, St. Luke's; Dr. Caroline Faure, ISU; Joanna Schifel and Nicole Clark-Vega, IATA; Brent Faure, Portneuf Medical Center; Julie Hart and Dr. Mattis, Ideal Option; Misty Lawrence, DFM; Anne Lawler, Bd of Medicine

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

MOTION: **Rep. Lickley** made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2020, meeting. **Motion carried by voice vote.**

**UNANIMOUS
CONSENT
REQUEST:** **Chairman Wood** made a unanimous consent request to remove **H 558** from the agenda. There being no objection, the request was granted.

H 531: **Julie Hart**, Ideal Option, presented **H 531**, telehealth legislation to address rural shortages in addiction recovery clinics, treatment facilities, and physicians. Definitions have been updated to include medication-assisted treatment (MAT). Prescriptions have been updated to allow Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approved MAT medications. These changes allow doctors the ability to provide the best treatment, no matter the proximity.

Dr. Richard Mattis, Ideal Option, MAT Provider, testified **in support** of **H 531**. Recruitment of general practitioners and those certified in addiction recovery is a struggle in rural areas, where there is also a rapid growth of substance use and abuse. Inclusion of telemedicine addiction treatment allows rural patients access to quality specialized professionals. Treatment, such as is offered at Ideal Option locations, includes MAT, assessments by medical assistants (MAs), updated histories, and reconciled medications.

Focused doctor-patient interactions enable the doctor to help patients deal with social, housing, anxiety, other medical, and mental health issues. When needed, referrals are made to primary care and other local resources. Frequent telehealth or in-person visits have been shown to lower relapse rates. The results of the non-punitive MAT are individuals who become productive members of the work force and their communities.

Answering committee questions, **Dr. Mattis** said recovery is not a relapse. It is a sixty to ninety day abstinence. Most patients require six months of treatment to reach this point. The best use of MAT is for opioid addiction because it addresses symptoms and provides counseling. He said experience has taught him how motivational interviewing is the most effective technique to determine where a patient is in their desire to stop the drug use. Narcotics anonymous works as well as traditional counseling, if the group is chosen carefully.

MOTION: **Rep. Vander Woude** made a motion to send **H 531** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation.

For the record, no one else indicated their desire to testify.

Ms. Hart, in response to questions, stated there will need to be some education to assure Idaho doctors understand the training required to provide this treatment option. Ideal Options will be looking for Idaho physicians to work with as they expand their clinics.

Responding to further questions, **Dr. Mattis** explained local clinics are not set up for MAT therapy because patients need frequent visits, tests, and a lot of staff attention. For this reason, combining these patients with other medical patients is difficult. Training includes a board certification class, 1,500 patient contact hours, and continuing medical education credits. Telemedicine provides the ability to see thirty to forty patients a day. A live provider can optimally see fifteen to twenty patients a day. New patients require more time for the interview process.

**VOTE ON
MOTION:**

Chairman Wood called for a vote on the motion to send **H 531** to the floor with a **DO PASS** recommendation. **Motion carried by voice vote. Rep. Vander Woude** will sponsor the bill on the floor.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Representative Wood
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary