

**You may write to provincial government about this resolution as a private citizen; you may state you are a CWL member, but you cannot state you are writing on behalf of a CWL council, nor can you write to government using League letterhead."**

## **Legislation**

### **St. Boniface/Mary, Mother of the Church**

#### **Resolution 2013.05      Coverage of Psychologist Services in Private Practice under Manitoba Health Benefits**

- Whereas,** Manitoba Health pays for the services of a psychologist if the services are provided in the hospital or institutional care; and
- Whereas,** In private practice the fees for psychologists are prohibitive and are not covered by insured benefits (Manitoba Health Benefits); and
- Whereas,** One in five Canadians are diagnosed with mental health illness and some forms of mental health illness such as depression may lead to disability in a person; therefore be it
- Resolved,** That the Manitoba Provincial Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada, urge the Manitoba provincial government to provide for coverage of the services of psychologists in private practice under the Manitoba Health Benefits.

#### **BRIEF      Coverage of Psychologist Services in Private Practice under Manitoba Health Benefits**

"Manitoba Health pays for the services of a psychologist if the services are provided while you are hospitalized or receiving institutional care. Fees for psychologists in private practice are not covered by insured benefits but may be covered by private insurance plans such as Blue Cross." (Manitoba Health) The fee for treatment in private practice is approximately \$180.00 for 50 minutes for single/couple/family session. For persons seeking treatment without the benefit of private insurance, the fees may be prohibitive.

Definition of a psychologist is: "A professional specializing in diagnosing and treating diseases of the brain, emotional disturbance, and behavior problems. Psychologists can only use talk therapy as treatment; you must see a psychiatrist or other medical doctor to be treated with medication." (MedicineNet.com)

"One in five, at least this many Canadians are diagnosed with a mental illness, and the ratio is increasing every day. Access to psychologists is very limited in the public healthcare system. Waitlists are long, and coverage insurance is minimal." (Manitoba Psychological Society)

"The majority of psychologists in Manitoba work in a private setting, and thus the actual number of psychologists available with the public health-care system is far more dismal ..." (Winnipeg Free Press)

Clinical psychologists provide counseling and psychotherapy. They work with people who have life adjustments problems, and also with those who have emotional disorders or mental illness. They provide treatment for people of all ages and to families and to groups. Psychologists provide treatment for depression, anxiety, phobias, panic disorders, eating disorders, stress related problems, relationship problems, and severe mental disorders." (Psychology Resource Information System)

"Psychologists help people learn to cope with stressful situations, overcome addictions, manage their chronic illnesses and break past the barriers that keep them from reaching their goals." (American Psychological Association)

"Mental health means striking a balance in all aspects of your life: social, physical, spiritual, economic and mental." (Canadian Mental Health Association - Manitoba)

According to the World Health Organization "Depression is a common mental disorder. Globally, more than 350 million people of all ages suffer from depression; Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease; More women are affected by depression than men." (World Health Organization) "Antidepressants can be a very effective form of treatment for moderate-severe depression but are not the first line of treatment for cases of mild or sub-threshold depression." (Marcus, Marina, et al)

Persons diagnosed with a mental illness should be allowed access to alternate treatment along with or other than seeing a psychiatrist, who prescribes medication, to manage their illness. Including services for psychologists in private practice as part of Manitoba Health Benefits, would allow more persons affected by mental illness an opportunity to seek treatment that they would not normally do as a result of lack of insurance coverage.

## **WORKS CITED      Coverage of Psychologist Services in Private Practice under Manitoba Health Benefits**

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**ACTION PLAN      Coverage of Psychologist Services in Private Practice under Manitoba Health Benefits**

1. Write letters to the premier of Manitoba, minister of health and minister of finance with copies to your MLA urging the Manitoba provincial government to provide for coverage of the services of psychologists under the Manitoba Health Benefits.
2. Become informed and aware of the symptoms and treatment for mental health illness.
3. Sponsor educational opportunities for members to learn more about mental health illness.
4. Monitor the government's plan of action in response to request contained in the resolution.