

NASW: Thanks Governor Evers for vetoing complementary and alternative health care bill

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The National Association of Social Workers, Wisconsin Chapter appreciates Governor Evers' veto of Assembly Bill 86, the Complementary and Alternative Health Care bill.

This bill, however well-intentioned, has a dangerous and unnecessary provision that would exempt Complementary and Alternative Health Care (CAHC) providers from the provisions of the practice acts of the mental health provisions. With this provision, as long as a CAHC does not represent her or himself as a licensed mental health professional, he or she could provide psychotherapy to a client with no consequences.

This is extremely dangerous to vulnerable clients. Improper or inappropriate treatment can lead to suicide, serious mental or physical harm to the client or another individual or serious family or work conflict. Whether we are considering the needs of a Veteran with PTSD, a depressed and suicidal farmer about to lose his family farm or an extremely troubled adolescent, improper or inappropriate treatment can have deadly consequences.

Other states have passed bills supporting Complementary and Alternative Health Care providers without exempting them from the practice acts of the mental health professions. There is no need for a Wisconsin bill to include this very dangerous provision.