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Daniel P. Collins, J.D., Executive Director

NC Psychology Board

895 State Farm Road, Suite 101

Boone, N.C., 28607


Dear Mr. Collins:

Thank you for this opportunity to express my thoughts about the **proposed rule change under 21 NCAC 54.2008.**

I have been a Licensed Psychological Associate since 1982 and have provided psychological services in the fields of mental health, substance abuse, and developmental disorders over the past 37 years. I have reached a stage of retrospection in my life about my accomplishments and feel that I can offer valuable input to the question of supervision for Masters' Level Psychologists. My primary work has been providing psychological services for people with developmental disorders at J Iverson Riddle Developmental Center for 25 years. I have also worked on a part-time basis providing individual therapy and psychological services for people with mental illness through Catawba Valley Behavioral Healthcare for the past 12 years and prior to that for Broughton State Hospital for 2 1/2 years. Giving back to students learning in this field has been a fulfilling experience for me working as an adjunct instructor for Western Piedmont Community College for the past 12 years as well. Having had the opportunity to work alongside other professionals that provide mental health services including Licensed Practicing Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, there have many times when my clients have been forced to choose from among these other professionals simply because of paneling restrictions mandated by many insurance companies based on supervision requirements for LPAs.

Some of these clients that I have served for extended periods have expressed dismay when they have been told that they must switch to another therapist because their insurance will not pay for services rendered by an LPA. Despite the fact that LPAs typically go through educational curriculums that prepare them for careers that are equally or more rigorous and comprehensive than those obtained by other Master's level mental health professionals, LPAs continue to be subject to meeting standards that hinder competitive provision of services. I am not only advocating for Licensed Psychological Associates to have the benefit of independent practice, I am also advocating for the people in North Carolina to have the right to choose services from Master's level LPAs without restriction.

Sincerely,


Cynthia L. Berry, M.A.
Licensed Psychological Associate #744