



June 17, 2020

Chair Council President Amy Brendmoen  
St. Paul City Hall and Court House  
15 West Kellogg Boulevard  
St. Paul MN 55102

Dear Chair and Council Members:

On behalf of Allina Health, I want to thank Council Member Brendmoen and the whole Council for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Ordinance 20-15 Prohibiting Conversion Therapy for minors.

Allina Health is an integrated delivery system that provides services for one-third of Minnesotans across the care continuum from family medicine to advanced specialty care; including mental health and addiction. Within mental health specifically, we care for more than 100,000 patients through inpatient services in geriatric, adult and adolescent programs, outpatient services in ambulatory care, adult day treatment, and adolescent partial-hospital treatment.

As a practicing psychologist at United Hospital Mental Health Clinic with a strong emphasis on working with the LGBTQ+ community, I can firmly say that your proposed ban is supported by medical and mental health research as well as professional best practices. The premise of Conversion Therapy is based on assumptions that not being heterosexual or cisgender is inherently flawed and that therapy is needed to fix this. Let me be clear that all of the major mental healthcare organizations in the United States thoroughly oppose these two assumptions and instead support valuing and affirming peoples authentic gender identity and sexual orientation. Furthermore, there is no credible research supporting Conversion Therapy's efficacy.

Beyond the fact that Conversion Therapy is flawed at its premise and is ineffective, it is also harmful to those who have been subjected to it. I have heard time and again from my patients about the long-lasting negative consequences of Conversion Therapy. Their accounts mirror what is found in the literature, including increased depression and anxiety, decreased self-esteem, shame, poorer family relationships, and increased suicidal ideation/suicide attempts.

Thank you so much for creating a space to have this conversation with the goal of creating a community where all are affirmed and embraced for who they are. Allina Health is pleased to lend its support to this measure to ban Conversion Therapy for minors.

We thank you for your leadership on this important issue, and for your service to our community.

*Mailing Address: PO Box 43, Mail Route 10811, Minneapolis, MN 55440-0043*

Sincerely,

Daniel Hurley, PhD, LP  
East Metro Lead Psychologist  
Allina Health

CC: St. Paul City Council