

Stocco, Janet

From: Harvey-McPherson, Lisa <lmcperson@northernlight.org>
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 8:58 AM
To: Claxton, Ned; Stocco, Janet; Zager, Sam; Hymanson, Patricia
Cc: Olson, Rachel
Subject: Public Comment Summary - Licensing Genetic Counselors

This message originates from outside the Maine Legislature.

During the September 7th Genome-Editing Technology Advisory Panel meeting, members expressed interest in information on the number of genetic counselors in Maine. I am glad to see member interest in genetic counselors and am reaching out regarding licensing genetic counselors. Many states license genetic counselors (including New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut). Maine does not have licensing standards.

In my role as Vice President of Government Relations for Northern Light Health I have been asked to advocate that Maine establish licensing standards for genetic counselors. Given the increasing role of genetics in health care, the service provided by the counselors has significant value to the patients and families in need of this information. Licensure establishes a standard of qualification that the public (and referring providers) can rely upon when seeking this service. For example, New Hampshire licensure requires that the individual to have a currently valid certificate issued by the American Board of Genetic Counseling or the American Board of Medical Genetics.

Licensure is not a guarantee of insurance payment, but lack of licensure is a barrier to insurance coverage for genetic counseling services. Insured individuals would benefit from insurers covering the service provided by a licensed counselor.

The National Society of Genetic Counselors has excellent information on the status of state licensure. You will note that the site lists Maine status as in progress. From my research this is not accurate, I reached out to the Society regarding their source and I haven't received a response yet.

[States Issuing Licenses \(nsgc.org\)](https://www.nsgc.org)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment to the Advisory Panel

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