

1
2
3 **Title: Psychiatry Turns To Drug Therapy**

4
5 **Introduced by: Harvey Halberstadt, MD**

6
7 **Original Author: Harvey Halberstadt, MD**

8
9 **Referred to: Reference Committee A**

10
11 **House Action:**
12 _____

13
14 **Whereas, psychiatrists are critical in treating patients with mental**
15 **disorders, and**

16
17 **Whereas, insurance companies' reimbursement rates discourages**
18 **psychiatrists from practicing psychotherapy, but their rates encourage**
19 **psychiatrists to practice as psychopharmacologists (Talk Doesn't Pay, So**
20 **Psychiatry Turns Instead to Drug Therapy, New York Times, March 6, 2011), and**
21 **Whereas, a government survey of psychiatrists in 2005 revealed that only 11%**
22 **of respondents practice psychotherapy (I bid), and**

23
24 **Whereas, psychopharmacologists treat patients in 10-15 minute sessions**
25 **usually every few months prescribing multiple drugs chosen to alleviate the**
26 **patients' symptoms without resolving the problems that give rise to symptoms**
27 **paralleling the practice of internists and family practitioners, and**

28
29 **Whereas, the reimbursement rates for psychotherapy have deductibles**
30 **as high as \$3000 (GM salaried employees) and co-payments as high as \$80**
31 **which penalizes traditional psychiatrists who earn \$70 to \$90 per hour before**
32 **business expenses compared with the earnings of psychopharmacologists**
33 **which can be \$150 per hour or more, and**

34
35 **Whereas, patients generally gain more with a combination of**
36 **psychotherapy and drugs prescribed when clinically indicated than with drugs**
37 **alone, and**

38
39 **Whereas, the number of medical students who choose psychiatry as a**
40 **profession is too small to replace the psychiatrists who annually leave their**
41 **practice, and**

42
43 **Whereas, unless the reimbursement rates for psychotherapy is remedied**
44 **considerably, it can be the demise of psychiatry which can accelerate**
45 **psychologists being given the legal right to prescribe medication as already**
46 **authorized in some states, and**

47
48 **Whereas, it behooves MSMS to protect the practices of its members;**
49 **therefore be it**

50 **RESOLVED: That MSMS advocate that third party reimbursement rates**
51 **for psychotherapy as practiced by psychiatrists be appropriate for their skills;**
52 **and be it further**

53

54 **RESOLVED: That MSMS study and make recommendations on**
55 **inequitable third party reimbursement policies for psychotherapy.**

56

57

58 **WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE**
