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Dear Representatives,

I am writing to you as a practicing occupational therapist in New Hampshire to respectfully request your **support** for SB480, legislation that would eliminate preauthorization requirements for outpatient therapy services unless a patient requires more than 8 visits. SB480 represents an essential step toward ensuring timely, effective, and uninterrupted care for the patients we serve.

As a healthcare provider, I witness the negative impact that preauthorization requirements have on patient health, safety, and functional outcomes. The administrative burden associated with preauthorization has grown to an unsustainable level for therapy practices across the state. Waiting five business days or longer for authorization decisions creates delays such as directly postponing the start of urgently needed therapy, particularly for patients who are recovering from surgical procedures that require immediate care (e.g. tendon repairs, elbow surgery, or wrist/distal radius fractures). As a result, medical attention during key healing timeframes can be missed or delayed resulting in adverse effects. New Hampshire outpatient therapy practices often require dedicated staff solely to manage preauthorization requests. This creates a moderate to high administrative burden associated with these requirements. For provider owned clinics, this means unnecessary time away from direct patient care.

Preauthorization processes frequently force patients to delay or abandon treatment, placing them at risk for worsened conditions, **avoidable decline in function**, and unnecessary and prolonged recovery and medical visits. Providers often spend excessive time navigating preauthorization instead of dedicating those hours to direct patient care. This burden is especially challenging for small and rural practices that do not have the administrative infrastructure to absorb these demands.

**An 8-visit threshold before requiring preauthorization is a reasonable and evidence-informed approach.** It balances the need for payer oversight with the clinical reality that timely access to therapy is essential for preventing loss of function, reducing long-term healthcare costs, and supporting patient independence. Early intervention is often the determining factor in whether a patient returns to work, avoids surgery, or remains safe in their home.

Passing SB480 would reduce unnecessary administrative barriers, improve patient outcomes, and allow therapists across our state to focus on delivering high-quality, effective care. I urge you to

support this legislation and stand with patients and providers who are working to ensure access to timely therapy services.

Thank you for your consideration and for your commitment to improving healthcare for the people of New Hampshire. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this further or provide additional information from the clinical perspective.

Sincerely,

*Lisa Owen, OTD, OTR/L, CLT, CHT*