

**Position Paper**  
**Iowa Health Freedom Coalition**

***"We want to hold our basic public policies and laws in high regard and do not want them to change with the wind, so changing laws is always regarded as a big step. But when it reflects a new paradigm for the betterment of a community, it is done with courage and with much celebration because even in the pain of the shift, it brings in hope for a better world."—Diane Miller, JD, Executive Director, National Health Freedom Coalition***

**The "Iowa Access to Wellness Act "**

**THE NEED TO ACCESS WELLNESS SERVICES**

Many people, especially those with chronic disorders (be they minor or serious) find that they need the cost-effective, holistic, natural approaches that are only available from unlicensed providers of the healing arts. Their motivation may be personal preference, or may derive from years of suffering. Once set on a path in search of relief or cure, many different healing arts providers may be consulted until a person finds the "right" provider or providers for their path to health. Whatever the motivation, their search has the best chance of success only if they have freedom to access the full range of healthcare providers — conventional and complementary.

**THE PROBLEM**

The United States Constitution preamble states that the people came together to form the United States in order to promote their general welfare and to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves. In alignment with this purpose, one of our most important rights as Americans should be freedom to access the healing arts services we judge best for ourselves.

Unlike citizens of some other states, Iowans currently do not have the right of unrestricted self-determination in their pursuit of health and well-being. This is because the current Iowa Medical Practice Act and administrative rules define the practice of medicine so broadly that many skilled and qualified unlicensed healing arts providers cannot practice without putting themselves at risk of prosecution for practicing medicine without a license.

Here is the definition of the practice of medicine according to the Iowa Administrative Code 653—1.1(17A,147):

"The practice of medicine and surgery shall mean holding one's self out as being able to diagnose, treat, operate or prescribe for any human disease, pain, injury, deformity, or physical or mental condition and who shall either offer or operate or prescribe for any human disease, pain, injury deformity or physical or mental condition."

**THE SOLUTION**

The Iowa Access to Wellness Act corrects this situation by placing natural healing modalities back into the public domain. This will protect Iowans' right to access information about the full range of healthcare options as well as their right to choose

the healthcare providers they desire. These providers will then not be over-regulated by conventional medical licensing laws, which create exclusive professional turf and restrict freedom of access to natural and holistic wellness care. This act is congruent with the ideals of the Constitutions of the United States and Iowa in that it will preserve as much freedom as possible for the citizens of Iowa while providing adequate safety.

## **MODALITIES THAT MAY BECOME AVAILABLE AFTER PASSAGE OF THE IOWA ACCESS TO WELLNESS ACT**

Wellness modalities that unlicensed persons might provide include, but are not limited to, the following:

Ayurveda, homeopathy, Native American healing traditions, naturopathy, traditional Chinese healing systems, meditation, hypnosis, guided imagery, dance therapy, music therapy, art therapy, prayer, mental healing, herbal therapies, dietary therapy, individual biological therapies such as bee pollen, massage, body work, somatic movement therapies, reflexology, hydrotherapy, energy therapies, Reiki, Touch for Health, breathwork, biofield therapeutics, and bioelectromagnetic or magnet therapy.

## **DEMAND FOR NATURAL AND HOLISTIC WELLNESS CARE**

It is estimated that over one million Iowans now use natural and holistic wellness care services.

Americans are spending annually over \$27 billion a year on "Complementary and Alternative" healthcare services. (JAMA Nov. 1998)

An overwhelming majority of citizens (88%) believe in alternative therapies and agree that there are some good ways of treating sickness that medical science does not recognize. (National Science Foundation Survey 2001)

Over 42% of Americans are using unconventional therapies. (JAMA Nov. 1998)

Freedom of Access legislation has already been passed in Idaho, Minnesota, Rhode Island and California. Minnesota passed its Freedom of Access to Complementary and Alternative Healthcare Act in 2000. Iowans are able to travel to Minnesota to legally receive care from unlicensed complementary and alternative healthcare providers that they cannot receive in Iowa.

States that have formed a health freedom organization to pass similar legislation are Iowa, Wisconsin, Arkansas, New Jersey, Texas, Kansas, New York, Florida, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Georgia, Oklahoma.

## **CONCLUSION**

*The Iowa Access to Wellness Act will protect Iowan's freedom to access the natural and holistic wellness services while providing safety through a set of mandated prohibitions and disclosures.*