

**Allison Millar, BS, MS, LAc on the status of Acupuncture as an Essential Service in NH –
May 16, 2020**

- We have not been given essential status- been unable to practice since early April; we've been given a "loose" starting date of June 1st, which means it could be even longer.
- Acupuncture is a healthcare modality. 4 year program of graduate school, similar to Chiropractic and Physical Therapy. It's also recognized as a medical procedure by most insurance companies, including the VA, which is run by the government.
- It seems there is no reason to what **order** industries are being open in
 - certainly not in the order of the amount of value of they have in protecting people from getting sick from CoVid-19 by boosting their immune systems or helping people through the many negative effects of social distancing.
 - And it's not in the order of the amount of benefit they have to the physical and emotional wellbeing of the people.
 - **This is wrong and it doesn't make sense.**
- Acupuncture is evidence-based and recognized by the WHO in the treatment of over 100 conditions.
- **My patients are suffering:**
 - I have patients with chronic pain that acupuncture is the only thing that helps.
 - I treat a patient with Trigeminal Neuralgia every 2 weeks- and he has no symptoms as long as we do this. He's been in excruciating pain for over a month, now. Western Medicine could not help him with it for 10+ years.
 - I treat a teenage boy for debilitating anxiety. It has been awful for him to not have his treatments
 - I treat not one, but two woman who have recently reversed their diagnoses of cancer while undergoing treatment with me- and we need to continue their progress otherwise, the cancer may come back.
 - I have a patient who has red burning flakey lips- she is a nurse at a hospital and western medicine couldn't help her- after 3 sessions, it completely went away. She had been coming once every 2 weeks so we could treat the underlying condition of it, until I had to close. Of course, it came back, and she's suffering. She needs her treatment!
 - Another patient- neuropathy of the feet- intense pain and numbness. Based on how long he had it and his other health conditions, I estimated he would need 8-10 sessions. At 6 treatments in, we started making immense progress and he was thrilled! Then, I had to close.
 - Acu is different than western medicine- it's not emergency medicine, it's preventative medicine. And, it's just as valuable.
 - Our industry is capable and trained to serve our patients just as safely as other healthcare providers on the list of the essential services.
 - We are a **small cohort in NH** so we don't have the numbers of people to speak for us.
 - I've spent hours on these public comments line and haven't gotten a chance to speak nor, have heard another acupuncturist or person speaking on our behalf.
 - **States** where acupuncturists practice in large numbers have made them essential:
 - Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey, Washington, California
 - We need to not only to move our scheduled reopening date of June 1st up to ASAP but, to categorize acupuncture as an essential business- so that if this happens in the future, patients won't need to suffer.

What can you do?

- Sign Petition - can find it on my facebook page and on my website
- Submit a comment to the NH task force:
- Can also call in to comment to the task force at their scheduled public comment times - Tuesday and Friday, I think
- All information is on my website: basicbalancekeene.com