

February 22, 2021

Senator John Jasinski  
c/o Assistant Joey Wiley  
95 University Avenue W.  
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3211  
St. Paul, MN 55155

**Re: Senate Pension Oversight Committee Hearing with MN PERA**

Dear Senator Jasinski,

I am writing to address concerns over Minnesota PERA's use of Managed Medical Review Organization (MMRO) to manage claims. Specifically, MMRO employs the services of Dr. T. Gratzer, MD, who conducted my Independent Psychological Evaluation (herein "IPE") as it relates to my PERA Disability Application. I have been diagnosed with PTSD and Panic Disorder. I have been undergoing therapeutic treatment for nearly a year, but am not yet to the point of being able to return to my beloved profession; I don't know that I will ever be able to return based on the significant psychological trauma I have endured as a police officer.

My IPE took place one afternoon at Dr. Gratzer's office. He conducted an in-person interview after written testing. Based on Dr. Gratzer's questions and behavior as he frantically looked through his copy of my file, it was evident that he had never reviewed any of my information until then. He attempted to address critical incidents I had listed as having great impact on my mental health. As he addressed these incidents, he knew little to nothing of even the most general details, he made declarative statements about my symptoms are or "should be" and wrote them down as if they were statements that I had made. I had to stop Dr. Gratzer multiple times and point out to him that his statements about my psychological response to the incidents were *not* my statements and were *not* accurate; rather, they were his. He would literally ask me a questions and then cut my off abruptly and essentially immediately as I began to respond, then would interject his own assumption about what my answer "should be;" he then would write down *his assumption* as though they were my answers. I felt completely and utterly unheard; I was clearly nothing more than a paycheck to him, and he overtly could care less about my trauma or how it truly has affected me. Rather, he was concerned with getting the "interview" done and being able to write down his conclusions as though they were my words.

As an example, during the process, Dr. Gratzer declared that I am struggling with financial difficulties. I stopped him and made a blunt statement that I never once addressed my financial situation, either in my PERA application, my prior psychological evaluations, or this current interview. He again tried to tell me "well, you must be financially stressed and struggling because everyone is if they are out of work." I told him "no, my finances are not a source of stress to me at this point." He apologized for making inferences and moved on, but then continued to make more inferences regarding nearly everything that he asked me as he went. He routinely mischaracterized my responses; for example, he would ask me how often I felt a certain symptom and if I answered "several times a week" he would then say "okay, so we will say 1-2 times a week." He would then move on to the next question so that I could not object.

As the interview went on, Dr. Gratzer commented tiresomely that my file was "far more comprehensive than he had anticipated." He constantly checked his watch, sent and received text messages, and was quite hurried in his interview.

One of the most regrettable and injurious effects of Dr. Gratzer's style of interview is that he took a very accusatory tone to my descriptions of symptoms, often downplaying or minimizing my response to some deeply harmful incidents. His interview style is best described as harsh, unprofessional, and critical. I left the IPE feeling extensively harmed, and it was an extreme

setback to my treatment that I undergo weekly for PTSD, for which I am paying for out of pocket with no insurance or workers compensation coverage.

I respectfully ask that the Senate Pension Oversight Committee strongly advise PERA to modify the approach to Independent Psychological Evaluations, and direct PERA to use caution in who falls under the purview of their employ for these purposes.

Respectfully,  
An Injured Officer