

Janet Auster
170 Sisson Avenue Building 5
Hartford, CT 06105
Testimony Public Health Committee
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Greeting members of the Committee, Senators and Representatives. I'm Janet Auster from Hartford and I receive Medicare and Medicaid.

I'm here to testify on behalf of people who might qualify for universal health coverage. I want to make sure that people's mental health needs are covered. There should be parity between psychiatric and other disabilities. Universal health care should not weaken Medicaid coverage.

The pressing issue for me right now is the demands that are placed on all of us to get a job to compensate and feel responsible for the fact that Medicaid is not totally covering the cost for our medication and Medicare needs and therapeutic needs.

The very nature of our dilemma is that we are divided and can't totally take care of our selves financially and need help and psychiatric and emotional attention.

As a member of Chrysalis Center I am in the Friend-to-Friend Program and have a stipend salary that the person that I work with also gets, to go out and enjoy our lives in the community.

However this job is not enough for either her or me to live on. If I insist that Chrysalis did that for us we would be considered greedy demanding people who didn't accept our limitations.

By not totally covering the cost of our medication and medical needs and therapeutic needs you are imposing a conflict on us that thwarts our peace of mind and prevents us from fully living our values of happiness and independence.

I want to ensure that people with psychiatric disabilities who are eligible for universal health care with psychiatric disabilities have their medical and therapeutic needs met. Please provide parity and coverage for our medical and psychiatric needs.