

Testimony before Appropriations Committee

DMHAS Budget Hearing

February 18, 2010

My name is Louise Patterson and I am a resident of New Britain. I am concerned about the budget cuts that will affect people with mental illnesses and those that will affect our programs. I am a 38 year old woman with many mental illnesses in my life. I was told by many people in my family I would never become anything in my life or finish school or go to college. I have proven my family wrong by being the only one to graduate from high school without dropping out and I will be the only one in my family to graduate from college with a degree in child education.

With my mental illness it was hard for me to do these things because in high school I was in special ed classes though out my schooling. In college I am in regular classes, which is a challenge for me, but I am graduating with a 4.0 average in May. If it wasn't for people supporting me like my family, club members, staff and people I work with at CMHA, I wouldn't be where I am at in my life right now. Community mental health services and supports like these must be preserved. I am asking you please don't do anything that will hurt those of us who have mental illness in our lives. It is a struggle for us to live with each day of our lives.

Thank you,

Louise Patterson

Member of Team Time social club, New Britain