

Testimony of Stamford Hospital

Submitted to the

Appropriations Committee

Wednesday, March 2, 2011

Hello – my name is Dr. Draupathi Nambudiri; I am the Chief of Psychiatry at The Stamford Hospital. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify about the proposed cuts to the hospital's grant funding from the Department of Mental Health and Addictions Services, or "DMHAS." The DHMAS grant funding in the amount of \$319,000 has been in place since 2004, in order to provide emergency assessment and inpatient psychiatric treatment for uninsured patients. As part of our DHMAS contract, The Stamford Hospital has a minimum of two psychiatric beds available for treatment of these patients. This kind of community support is particularly crucial due to the closing of the psychiatry hospitals over the past decades, resulting in fewer psychiatric hospital beds.

Our inpatient psychiatric unit works closely with the Optimus Behavioral Health outpatient program to provide step-down care for individuals leaving the hospital. The combined impact of grant losses would be extremely detrimental to our already overburdened system of care, resulting in increased emergency room gridlock as fewer services are available. In addition, we would anticipate longer lengths of stay on both the medical/surgical and psychiatric units due to lack of availability of resources. This would not only be costly to the hospital and the community, it would also cause unnecessary suffering for these, our most vulnerable citizens already suffering from an acute psychiatric condition.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Legislature to reject the proposed cuts in the DMHAS grant funding for both The Stamford Hospital and Optimus Health Care. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Thank you.