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**From:** Naomi Pinson  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 21, 2013 11:26 AM  
**To:** PHC Testimony  
**Subject:** Forced electroshock - HB 5298

Hello,

I am outraged that in this day and age people can be forced "treated" with something so terrible as electroshock. I have worked in the field for over twenty years now and have family members and friends who have had this travesty done to them. My own dear uncle, a brilliant and kind man despite ongoing mental health problems was so profoundly damaged by electroshock he had to give up his medical residency. He perceived that his memory was so damaged that he would not be able to adequately treat his patients. I have sat with friends and patients who wept because they, years after this so called "treatment", have lost precious memories of their life. These are the common after effects, and are not honestly shared in an informed consent process, even when it is not forced. The effects when dragged either shrieking and flailing, or sedated and degraded by neuroleptics to receive ECT are horrendous. They degrade and traumatized the person.

How can we degrade another human being this way? I myself have suffered lifelong serious endogenous depressions. I have had suicidal ideation that went on for nearly two years. Fortunately I have not had a lengthy episode of deep depression in over twenty years, proving that people can and do recover.

However, no matter how bad my depression got I would not wish "treatment" to be forced on me. Why is it that in other life threatening illnesses people can refuse treatment and have their wishes respected? Yet, if we, the "mentally ill" make this same choice, our choice is over ridden? How can mental health treaters expect to form a "therapeutic alliance" with patients when their wishes are so disregarded and they give "treatment" that results in permanent brain damage?

In twenty years I have not seen any long term good effect come from forcing treatment, nor have I seen any good long term outcomes come from ECT. I have seen a close friend, a brilliant Yale educated lawyer, with many years of serving public mental health law in an oversight position, acquire early dementia as a result of exposure to ECT. I have known more than one patient in the state hospital where I worked for four years who suicided after ECT. I believe the patient expatient movement is gaining momentum and that many practitioners are joining with them now. Many also identify as being psychiatrically diagnosed, and one in five American residents now take some kind of psychoactive medication. I am sure people who make these decisions to force treat others can and will realize that simply by being identified as having a psychiatric diagnosis and simply because of taking some form of psychiatric medication, even without a diagnosis they have entered into a very grey area concerning their civil rights. Please consider the lose of freedom, even freedom of enjoying the integrity of one's own body, that forced treatment, and forced ECT represents. Naomi  
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