



February 27, 2015

Written testimony of Linda Garcia, Administrator, Beacon Brook Health Center, Concerning the Governor's Recommended FY 2016 and FY 2017 Proposed Budget

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker and to the members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Linda Garcia. I am the Administrator, at Beacon Brook Health Center in Naugatuck, Connecticut. Beacon Brook has been providing nursing care in the community of Naugatuck for twenty one years. We have 126 beds and provide both short stay rehab and long term care. We have 222 employees and are a recent recipient of recognition from the American Health Care Association for safely reducing hospital readmissions and safely reducing the off label use of antipsychotics.

I am here today to say that the staff in my building work very hard doing a difficult job, a job not everyone can do or wishes to do. The expectations of residents, families and regulatory agencies are high, yet for 8 years there has not been a Medicaid increase. Clearly other costs have gone up, as you know from your own personal finances. What we have now is insufficient. Cuts in our budget will not be able to be effected without severe effects on service, primarily staffing, as that is our greatest cost.

Here are some examples of what we've been up against while the rates have been stagnant:

- Drug costs for residents have increased dramatically. Drugs the facility pays for under Medicare A have increased by \$62,997 from 2013-2014 to 2014-2015.
- The new system of criminal background checks will be almost \$79.00 per person. We hired 76 people last year, which will now cost over \$6,000 for background checks alone.
- Food costs have increased, as we all know from going to the grocery store. My costs for 2015 are anticipated to increase \$45,000.
- Computer software for medical records and encryption are new costs for facilities.
- At Beacon Brook the needs of our residents are also increasing. People are aging in place, with ever increasing comorbidities. I currently have five people one hundred years old or older.
- 74% of my residents are on Medicaid. Medicaid does not cover certain key services like therapy.

Please help us deliver the high quality care that we want to deliver, and that you expect from us. Please give us the resources we need to do it.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.