February 26, 2015

Written testimony of Deborah S. Torrey, Administrator, Shady Knoll Health Center, Seymour, CT Concerning the Governor's Recommended FY 2016 and FY 2017 Proposed Budget

Good evening. My name is Deborah Torrey and I am the Administrator at Shady Knoll Health Center in Seymour, Connecticut. Shady Knoll is a 5 star facility in the Naugatuck Valley, a member of the Preferred Partnership with Griffin Hospital, and a provider of short term rehabilitation and sub-acute care as well as long term care.

I have spoken with a number of our employees: certified nursing assistants, nurses, therapeutic recreation directors, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, and our dining services, resident support services, physical plant, and laundry employees. It takes many people of many disciplines to care for our residents. Our population becomes more acute, requiring more specialized care and equipment to provide the services expected of us. These are people who are dedicated and work every day to care for others, while having to stretch their own paychecks to cover the needs of their families. These are people who understand the importance of budgets, but also understand that we cannot continue without an increase in Medicaid funding to provide care to those who expect and deserve it.

There has been almost no help in the budget for almost 8 years. We see and feel every day the impact of having to make our budget stretch further while providing more care. Our employees have seen the impact of reaching the breaking point as 2 of our local nursing homes have had to close – largely due to a flat Medicaid budget. The idea that our nursing facility could be cut this session is beyond my understanding. I cannot explain to our residents or employees that we need to cut even more than our flat funding has required over the years.

Please help support this population; the elderly deserve to be treated with care, respect, and the best resources available. Please help our employees provide this to our residents.

Deborah S. Torrey, L.N.H.A.
Shady Knoll Health Center

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