



Touchpoints At Bloomfield

Written testimony of Jaime Faucher, Nursing Home Administrator, Touchpoints At Bloomfield 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.

I am Administrator at Touchpoints At Bloomfield in Bloomfield, Connecticut. Touchpoints at Bloomfield is a longstanding provider of nursing care in the community with 150 licensed beds and 200 employees. My facility is 95 % occupied and serves 89 % Medicaid patients. Touchpoints at Bloomfield is an American Health Care Association quality awards winner and has specialized programs in Short Term Rehabilitation, Congestive Heart Failure, Psychiatric care and care for frail elderly. My facility is managed by iCare Management, LLC, a Connecticut based company which was established in 2001. iCare has 10 facilities exclusively in Connecticut.

Touchpoints at Bloomfield takes care of hundreds of residents each year with great success. One example involves a 50 year old resident that arrived at our facility with multiple complex diagnoses that limited her walking to not more than a few feet at one time. This resident was carefully treated by all three in-house physical therapy disciplines and by our respiratory therapist.. After weeks of coordinated therapy treatment and exceptional care from our nursing staff, the resident was able to walk up and down the halls, do a flight of stairs, be removed from oxygen treatment, and return home. This is just one of many cases that the staff at Touchpoints at Bloomfield take care of everyday.

Medicaid Skilled Nursing facility rates have been essentially flat since 2007, but costs have been dramatically rising, especially labor costs. The majority of our staff is represented by New England Health Care Employees Union District 1199/SEIU. It is my understanding that there are 51 homes with contracts expiring on March 15, 2015, including my facility. I cannot foresee settlements of 51 state-wide contracts without the potential for job actions with flat or reduced Medicaid funding. Job actions cost the State and Providers a lot of money! My employees deserve to be recognized for the hard work they do and my residents deserve quality care.

In addition to the union issue, we have seen other significant increases in uncontrollable costs without recognition by the Medicaid program. Utility Costs for average sized facilities have increased by \$29,000 per annum. ~~Unfunded impositions by the Affordable Care Act have increased costs by \$35,000 per annum.~~

Connecticut has one of the highest combined federal and state unemployment tax rates in the Nation, costing a typical nursing home \$17,000 per annum.

The Medicaid rate does not recognize the exceptional care that my staff gives. The facility provides numerous required services to our Medicaid residents that are not reimbursed by the State, such as Physical, Occupational, and Speech Therapies, respiratory services which include visits with a registered therapist, oxygen services and specialized respiratory equipment. We would ask you to support the necessary services of nursing homes its residents and its valued employees.

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