

Written Testimony for the Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Health and Hospitals

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My name is Annie Harper, and I work as a Research Scientist at the Program For Recovery and Community Health, Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine. I work on DHMAS funded research into financial health at the Connecticut Mental Health Center (CMHC), exploring the connections between poverty and mental illness, with a specific focus on problems that low-income people with mental illness face in managing their money. We believe that by adapting innovations and lessons learned from the field of poverty and finance, building on citizenship-oriented approaches to mental health care, we will be able to offer services to CMHC clients that will significantly improve their quality of life, reduce finance-related stress and so directly impact one of the key social determinants of mental health.

The financial health project is just one of many innovative research projects underway at CMHC. These projects relate to all aspects of mental health care, and result not only in numerous publications disseminating lessons learned around the broader mental health care community nationwide and globally, but also directly result in improved care for CMHC clients. The proposed cuts to CMHC's research programs would have a devastating impact on this ground-breaking research.

CMHC is an extraordinary place, combining compassionate care for its clients with innovative and ground-breaking research. As a social anthropologist, I have found CMHC an enormously rewarding place to conduct research, with an environment that fosters innovation, promotes interdisciplinary partnerships, and leading the way in taking clients seriously as peer service providers, and as research collaborators.

Please take whatever action necessary to restore funding for this vital institution and the research that takes place there.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Annie Harper', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Annie Harper, Ph.D.