



Date: March 6, 2015

To: The Appropriations Committee

From: V. Deborah Culligan, Quinnipiack Valley Health District

RE: Governor's Cuts to School Based Health Centers

I am writing today to note that the annualized rescission cuts to the school based health centers proposed in the Governor's budget, are based on an assumption that does not hold true for our population at the SBHC in Hamden.

The reduction is based on the assumption that there will be HUSKY caseload growth in SBHCs. It also assumes that because there will be increased numbers of families with health insurance due to ACCESS CT, that SBHCs will get reimbursed for their services. However, please note that our enrolled Medicaid population has not substantially changed over the last 3 years, as most of our eligible students were already enrolled in HUSKY. Further, many families have high deductibles with ACCESS CT plans. Therefore, if we see a student two or three times per year for illness or preventive health care, it is not likely that we will get paid, as the deductible must first be reduced to zero before any payments are made.

Last, I would like you to know that we frequently have students enroll in the SBHC who have just moved here from other countries and want to enroll in school. They do not have health insurance yet, but require physicals and immunizations before they can start attending. This past school year alone we have had 15 students from other countries needing these services.

Many agencies are competing for funds and you are faced with difficult decisions. SBHCs not only provide health care services like physical exams and immunizations, but also have an impact on improving grades and attendance. Our student satisfaction survey showed that 38% of responders felt their grades had improved, 35% felt that their attendance improved, and 60% acknowledged that their actions affected their health. While these may not seem like huge numbers, they are certainly significant in this adolescent population at Hamden High School. SBHCs are a trusted part of their world and can impact whether or not the adolescent goes on to successfully complete high school and become a contributor to the community.

Cutting funds so significantly will impact our ability to continue to provide the level of service that we do. Each year is a financial struggle. Costs continue to increase as funds are proposed to decrease.

Thank you for your time.

Quinnipiack Valley Health District

A Regional Health Department Serving Bethany, Hamden, North Haven and Woodbridge, CT

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