

**TESTIMONY OF  
Stamford Hospital  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
Thursday, February 18, 2016**

**HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The  
Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017**

**Stamford Hospital** appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 5044, An Act Making Adjustments To State Expenditures For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2017**. We oppose the imposition of budget cuts for mental health and substance abuse disorder treatment services. If enacted, these cuts will further destabilize an already stressed mental healthcare system, and impose a greater burden on hospital emergency departments.

Stamford Hospital is on the front lines of an intensifying threat to public health from heroin use, PCPs, and prescription drug abuse. This is exactly the wrong time for the state to withdraw its support of our mental healthcare system. Rather, it is time to coordinate local, regional and state efforts.

This leads to another distressing budget adjustment - a \$3 million proposed cut to the grant program authorized by the General Assembly last year to establish Community Care Teams (CCTs). Stamford Hospital established a CCT to improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations, including those who are chronically physically and/or mentally ill, homeless, or abusing substances.

- Stamford Hospital's Community Care Team, operating for over a year, has achieved more than 60% reduction in costs for four of its most vulnerable patients, amounting to \$378,000.

The CCT outcome data in Stamford clearly points to improved care, increased community safety, and a reduction of costs by providing wraparound services through this multi-agency partnership. As the state struggles with its budget, we urge the legislature to invest in, rather than cut, Community Care Team funding.

Hospitals and other community providers need your support to preserve what remains of the mental health safety net at the very time Connecticut residents need and are demanding improvements to the mental health system. Thank you for your consideration.

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