

Feb 18 DMHAS budget hearing

Good evening Senator Bye, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Grant Mao and I live in New Haven. I am here to testify on the Governor's proposed midterm budget adjustments related to the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, I understand the fiscal crisis we find ourselves in and that these will be hard decisions for legislators. And, I want to express my deep concern about and opposition to the deep and devastating proposed cuts to mental health and behavioral health services and supports.

I want to share my experiences with Connecticut Mental Health Center. I came to New Haven in 2014 August for pursuing my education at Yale School of Management. However, soon after I came on campus, I got overwhelmed and became depressed. After I didn't get the help I needed from Yale School of Management, my depression became severe that I had to stay in hospital for 6 days. Then, I was dismissed from Yale. So my insurance was cancelled and I couldn't afford to get treatments by paying on my own.

When I was in desperation, CMHC took me in as a patient. I started to come to my weekly, sometimes bi-weekly therapies. The staff members were very caring that I began to make progresses in my recovery. As an outpatient, I was under care of Dr. Matthew Gambino, Susan Frechette and Jeanne. After I transferred into an in-patient unit, I received cognitive therapies from Benjamin Cooleyhall. I have been receiving therapies from CMHC over 10 months. My health condition has been improved dramatically.

I am very grateful for the services and help I get from CMHC. I couldn't imagine how my health condition would be if I didn't receive my treatments and therapies from CMHC. I hope I will continue to receive such help and support from CMHC.

I urge you to protect the health and wellbeing of our CT residents by supporting these essential and core services and supports. Thank you for your attention to my testimony and these crucial services and supports!

Best regards,

Grant Mao

Feb 17th 2016