



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR
HEALTHCARE AT HOMESM

Budget Cuts to Mental Health Moves Those Most at Risk from Safe Home Management to Costlier Settings

Letter to the CT Post Editor | April 2, 2015

One of the largest state budget cuts across all CT Medicaid provider services is to behavioral health clients receiving specialized in-home mental health nursing services and medication management.

Has the State of Connecticut forgotten that it made a conscious policy decision to close inpatient mental health hospitals more than a dozen years ago because these facilities were too costly to run? The State knew then that transitioning thousands of these patients with serious and persistent mental illness to home-based behavioral health management by home health agencies would save the State millions of dollars each year.

And these specially-trained home health care agency nurses and their teams have indeed achieved those savings to the tune of \$26 million just in the last 3 years alone.

Today, the Governor is proposing a 20 percent provider reimbursement cut to these home health agencies – a cut that will force the agencies to decide if they can afford to treat these Medicaid clients moving forward.

The State needs to remind itself why it closed the inpatient facilities in the first place. The reality is there is no back-up plan to manage the serious and persistent mentally ill Medicaid population at home. These clients will default to hospital emergency rooms, clinics, nursing homes and the streets of our inner cities like Hartford, New Haven and Bridgeport. The Governor's proposed cuts will have devastating and costly negative implications that can not be reversed.

Deborah R. Hoyt

President and CEO

CT Association for Healthcare at Home

The United Voice for Home Health and Hospice Agencies in Connecticut