



March 5, 2018

Dear Members of the Health and Human Services Finance Committee:

Thank you for holding a hearing on the quarterly reports for state operated programs. NAMI Minnesota advocated for the reporting due to our concerns about the amount of increased funding to state operated programs without accountability for the use of the funds to increase staffing and occupancy.

With media reporting on the inability of state operated programs to always being able to take patients within 48 hours of being committed while in jail, and the over 20% of people in community inpatient psychiatric units being unable to access the level of care provided at the Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center, the time has come to look at not only the purpose of state operated programs but the administration. While we readily admit that there is shortage of mental health professionals in Minnesota, we are concerned about the inability of state operated programs to hire and retain staff.

The January census reported the occupancy at AMRTC as 85 beds even though the budgeted beds were 110. The Community Behavioral Health Hospitals are budgeted for 16 beds for a total of 96, yet occupancy was at 84. We hope to learn what administrative actions have been taken to address the discrepancies at a time when people are experiencing long waits to enter into the facilities.

Before any additional funds are provided to state operated programs we believe that an analysis needs to be conducted of the services provided, the state's ability to meet their own and federal licensing requirements, the amount of treatment provided and the long term vision for the future of state operated programs.

State operated programs now serve only a small number people in our mental health system. It used to be that they were the largest provider – but no longer. Their role within our mental health system must be re-examined and adjusted accordingly.

We hope that the hearing today provides an opportunity to look more closely at state operated programs within the larger mental health system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sue Abderholden".

Sue Abderholden, MPH  
Executive Director



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