

The Counseling Service of Addison County provides a valid, needed service to residents who struggle with mental illness, homelessness, life-style challenges, economic hardship, loneliness, addictions to both legal and illegal substances, interpersonal relationships, medical issues, all varieties of trauma-the list is endless. What must not end, be reduced or cease to function is CSAC support for all these people, for their communities. Funding is a priority, specifically adequate funding for staff to maintain, improve, modify or expand services to meet the individual and collective need. Service in the field one on one requires a vehicle, fully operational, insured, registered – this is an expense. A CSAC employee has to meet that on-going expense as well as provide food, clothing, pay bills, and usually fore-go luxury items. Any increase in funding received personally eases the financial criteria necessary to perform in the CSAC arena. When the Waterbury State Hospital closed its doors, it became the challenge of the state to incorporate care for mentally-ill individuals-the same challenge exists today and a Medicaid Rate increase is necessary for work to be continued. The work has not disappeared and I am respectfully requesting attention be directed to funding increases as opposed to the disappearing or no increases of those needed dollars. TY