

From: Peter Fagan [PFagan@leg.state.vt.us]
Sent: Monday, February 12, 2018 2:49 PM
To: Theresa Utton
Subject: Fwd: appropriations committee comments-RMHS

Hi Theresa,

Comments from Rutland Mental Health. He is unavailable this evening.
Please place in our file.

TY

Peter

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Dick Courcelle <dcourcelle@rmhscn.org>
Date: February 12, 2018 at 2:26:03 PM EST
To: Peter Fagan <peterfagan.vt@gmail.com>, Peter Fagan <pfagan@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: appropriations committee comments-RMHS

February 12, 2018

Rep. Peter Fagan
Vice Chair-House Committee on Appropriations

Dear Representative Fagan:

I regret that I cannot be in attendance this evening at the Committees on Appropriations regional meeting in Rutland to give testimony, but I have another commitment which I must attend to in my role as a Rutland City School Commissioner.

I want you and the committee to know that Rutland Mental Health Services is deeply concerned over the proposed reduction of existing developmental disabilities waivers by \$4 million statewide in fiscal year 2019. DAIL Commissioner Hutt has explained the cut will be realized through a two percent reduction in existing developmental disabilities service plans (as outlined in her January 24, 2018 letter to the DD State Standing Committee). For Rutland Mental Health Services, this two percent rescission equates to about a \$325,000 reduction in services to 237 individuals in Rutland County.

Individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities receive these services for a variety of reasons:

- their personal health and safety is at risk
- public safety is at risk
- it may prevent costly psychiatric hospitalization or institutionalization
- it supports the employment of young adults.

Simply put, RMHS cannot sustain such a reduction in waiver funding without a significant negative impact on services to individuals and families in need in Rutland County.

This proposed cut seems inconsistent with a recent good faith agreement with the Agency of Human Services and DAIL whereby the Designated and Specialized Service Agencies are working together to address the need for accountability without destabilizing the developmental disabilities system of care. The goal of this effort is to fully meet the needs of those served and to ensure consistency between assessed need and funded services, all while achieving consistent quality outcomes, accountability of resources, and continued high consumer satisfaction. A reduction in funding seems counter to this effort.

At the basis of all the work that we do is a fundamental commitment to help people be healthy and connected to their communities, regardless of their disability. Reductions in supports for developmental disabilities further stresses a system that depends on healthy and vital relationships between people receiving and giving supports. Keeping people with developmental and intellectual disabilities active and engaged also improves the health and well-being of our community.

While on the topic of appropriations, I would be remiss if I did not emphasize the importance of Stage 2 of the workforce investment in the Designated Agency system as articulated in S.133 and Act 82. Rutland Mental Health Services encourages the appropriation of \$5.74 million in general funds to conceptually achieve a \$15 minimum wage for staff, but with flexibility to target compensation increases to the most critical positions to meet community needs, address local labor market dynamics, and cover employee benefit costs and technology infrastructure.

Please contact me should you have questions or the need for additional information. Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee.

Sincerely,

Dick Courcelle
Chief Executive Officer

Dick Courcelle
Chief Executive Officer
Community Care Network
Rutland Mental Health Services-Rutland Community Programs
PO Box 222
Rutland VT 05702
802-775-2381

Our Vision: Thriving Community. Empowered Lives.

The information contained in this transmission may contain privileged and confidential information, including patient information protected by federal and state privacy laws. It is intended only for the use of the person(s) named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, dissemination, distribution, or duplication of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of the original message.

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: The information contained in this transmission may be privileged, confidential and protected from disclosure under Federal Confidentiality Laws (42 CFR Part 2 and 45 CFR Parts 160-164). Any dissemination, distribution, or duplication of this communication is strictly prohibited without the consent of the writer. If you are not the intended recipient, or you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately at the email address above or delete this email.