



NAMI Chicago

Chicago's Voice on Mental Illness

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AN AFFILIATE OF THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI)
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Courtney Avery
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson
Springfield, IL 62761
Project 13-076

March 4, 2014

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

Dear Ms. Avery,

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Chicago is a city wide organization that advocates for those impacted by mental illness. The mission of NAMI Chicago is to provide hope and improve the quality of life for those in the greater Chicago area whose lives are affected by serious mental illness, by providing information and referrals, education, support, advocacy, and active community outreach.

NAMI Chicago works hard to advocate for services that are needed in communities throughout Chicago. NAMI Chicago has felt the impact of the decrease in inpatient psychiatric beds in Illinois. We are saddened that many people in need of inpatient treatment are sitting in emergency departments waiting for care at both private and state hospitals, only to get discharged hours later when beds are unavailable.

NAMI Chicago fully supports the rights of individuals to be treated in the least restrictive environment possible. However, it is best practice to have a broader array of treatment options available for individuals in crisis including inpatient hospitalization.

The Sinai Health System is showing leadership in expanding behavioral health services to Holy Cross Hospital in opening a 50 bed inpatient psychiatric unit. The expansion of Medicaid requires expansion of services providers especially in a community with great need for additional behavioral health support.

NAMI Chicago endorses and supports Sinai Health System's (SHS) request to bring an expansion of behavioral care to Holy Cross Hospital.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Alexa James, MS, LCSW
Executive Director