

A new GMCB Public Comment has been received.

Submit Time: 11/7/2023

Name: Connie Stabler

Affiliation:

Town/City: South Burlington, VT

Topic: Mental Health in hospitals

Comment: My son has had admissions to several hospitals across the state for mental health crisis treatment. He has encountered long waits in the ED's, including two week-long stays while waiting for a hospital bed. This must feel like torture to someone who is in need of urgent treatment for delusions, hallucinations', anxiety, fear, sleep deprivation, paranoia and more. The state needs to do a better job of providing appropriate access to hospital beds for people like my son. It is unacceptable and heart breaking and we must do better than this. This is not a new problem - it has been happening for many years. Hopefully, this can improve with the pandemic over, but the state has spent years discussing this before 2020, but with little to show for it. Recently I spent 6 1/2 hours waiting in both the waiting room and in a hallway on a stretcher at the ED to get an MRI to confirm a stroke. This was unacceptable. Last year I spent a night in the ED for overnight observation in what was an "overflow area," I guess, with only a curtain pulled around my bed so I could hear all of the noise in the ED. The doctor told me I would get a bed on the Neurology floor, but that didn't happen. The nurses did not check my status all night so I could have just gone home and had my husband check my status. While I was there. I heard two people come in with a mental health crisis and I could hear clearly their interviews with the doctors. That is a HIPPA violation. I have heard from friends that the same happened to them when they were in a "makeshift" ED. This is unacceptable and illegal. The state needs to do better. Again, this has been going on for some time and very little has been done to improve it. Poor planning on the state's part. I have spent many years testifying to the legislature and speaking individually with my own reps about this and other mental health treatment problems. My son stayed at the Middlesex secure facility (two double wide trailers) for at least 9 months. this is a step down facilities meant to be replaced within a year or two. It took almost a decade to do that. My experience with staff at all of the hospitals has been a positive one and THEY also deserve more than the workplaces and conditions that they have to deal with. It's time to spend some time and funds to make the needed improvements. Thanks for listening.

Post Comment: Yes