



Colonial Health & Rehab Center of Plainfield, LLC

"Family First"

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Written testimony of Curtis Rodowicz, Administrator of Colonial Health and Rehab Center of Plainfield, LLC, Concerning the Governor's Recommended FY 2020 and FY 2021 Proposed Budget

Good evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and to the members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Curtis Rodowicz and I am the Administrator of a single 90 bed skilled nursing facility located in Plainfield, Connecticut. Colonial Health and Rehab Center of Plainfield, LLC has been providing nursing home care in our community for over 38 years. We have 116 employees working at our facility and they care each and every day for our residents with the upmost care and compassion.

I want to begin by thanking the Appropriations Committee for supporting increases in last session's budget for nursing home wage and benefit increases for our employees. Recruiting and retaining workers in Connecticut's very competitive labor market remains one of our major challenges. Having an ample supply of workers to meet the needs of nursing home residents with increasing care needs on all shifts will even be more challenging as the Connecticut minimum wage continue to rise. Please know these new wage enhancement dollars will help in this ongoing struggle to assure quality care in our nursing home.

In this regard, these workers are doing an amazing job, and I am so grateful to them, and proud of them, for everything they are doing. Our center is a 4-star quality ranked facility, AHCA Bronze award recipient, and committed to quality improvement initiatives.

However, I fear that our nursing home continues to be forced to make short sighted decisions that will erode the quality standards we have worked so hard to gain over the past several years. Major changes are being developed by DSS called "Case Mix" which will change the way Medicaid reimburses our nursing home this year. While

we agree in concept with Case Mix and how it reimburses nursing homes based on the resident's established care needs, or acuity, our nursing home is afraid that the new Case Mix payments will ignore the Medicaid funding shortfalls of the past decade, and that quality will suffer with insufficient resources.

Our Senators and Representatives need to know that delivering the care everyone wants for their loved ones is getting harder and harder to provide in Connecticut. Our employees know this very well. There has been no Medicaid help in the state budget for now over a decade, but the nursing home population is older and sicker than it was twenty years ago. We see so much more dementia and Alzheimer's disease than ever before. Increasing resident comorbidities require greater staff skill sets and training, not to mention the use of various supplies and innovative treatments that did not exist or were an anomaly in years past. Today's nursing home resident also have greater behavioral health needs-----mental health and substance use disorders are common on top of the skilled nursing care that today's nursing home residents need. Case Mix could be an answer, but only if the funding shortfall is addressed. I ask that you restore the neglected funding over the past decade and show a commitment to our most vulnerable population.

Please help us deliver the care we all want and please make long overdue nursing home funding a priority in this year's budget.

On behalf of everyone at Colonial Health and Rehab, thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Curtis Rodowicz
Administrator
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