



February 19, 2020

*Written testimony of Joseph Bray, Administrator, Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation Center  
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 Joseph Bray. I am the Administrator at Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation Center in Middletown; Connecticut Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation Center has been providing nursing home care in our community for 31 years. We are a 102 beds nursing home, and we have approximately 115 employees working at our facility.

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, I want you to know how proud I am to be here with some of the key people from Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation Center. I'm the administrator, but these devoted caregivers, from RNs, LPNs, CNAs, all seek the same outcome----that is to deliver the highest quality care experience to anyone who comes to Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation Center. And these workers are doing an amazing job, and I am so grateful to them, and proud of them, for everything they are doing. Our short-term rehabilitation return to home rate is approximately 90%, one of the highest among our competitors, within our local community. Due to our excellent care and service, we have obtained great reviews from our state surveys, and from residents/families who utilizes our facility for both short-term and long-term needs. In addition, 4 in 5 residents return to the facility for their short-term rehabilitation needs. In the wake of Accountable Care Organization initiative, which penalizes providers for frequent hospitalization within a specified short period, the facility has implemented quality protocols which monitors, and help reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, providing better outcomes for all stakeholders.

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Health Care and Rehabilitation Center

I am concerned that our nursing home continues to be at a critical juncture in 2020. Major changes are being developed called "Case Mix" will change the way Medicaid reimburses our nursing home this year. While we in concept agree with Case Mix and how it reimburses nursing homes based on the care needs, or acuity, of the residents, 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.

Elected leaders need to know delivering the care everyone wants for their loved ones is getting harder and harder to provide in Connecticut. Our employees know this very well. The reason isn't hard to understand--there has been almost no additional 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. Today's nursing home resident also has 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.

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 Wadsworth Glen Health Care and Rehabilitation Center, thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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