



February 19th, 2020

**Written testimony of Theresa Sanderson, Administrator, West Hartford Health & Rehabilitation Center
Concerning the Governor's Recommended FY 2020 and FY 2021 Proposed Budget.**

Good evening. My name is Theresa Sanderson and I have been the administrator of WHHRC for the past 20 years. WHHRC is a 160 bed skilled nursing facility in WH Center. We are independently owned and have been providing excellent care for more than 45 years to the residents of CT. We have more than 200 employees working at our facility.

Let me begin by thanking the committee for supporting increases in last session's budget for nursing home wages and benefits. We are proud to be able to offer competitive wages and benefits that keep the staff retention rate at 95%.

I am proud of the excellent care the residents of WHHRC enjoy.

- We are the recipient of the AHCA Silver Quality Award.
- We are participating in bundles and post-acute networks at all the hospitals in our region.
- We have a higher than average rehab and discharge back to the community rate.
- Employee retention rate of 95% for direct care staff.
- We enjoy an over 90% satisfaction rate from residents, families and staff.
- Staff turnover rate is 10%. The industry average is over 70% turnover.
- 5 of our C.N.A. are in the CT ACHCA Hall of Fame.

In the last decade of declining reimbursement, the owner and management have been creative with reducing expenses. We have re-financed, partnered with green energy initiatives, used co-generation, and unfortunately have had to lay off staff. There is no where else to reduce while delivering this level of care our residents deserve.

We are entrusted to care for the most fragile population, who need us. Our residents live at WHHRC because they can't manage at home, or have nobody to take care of them, except for their WHHRC Family. Our residents deserve to receive the highest level of care and we need the funds to deliver this care. We haven't received necessary Medicaid increases to keep up with the rising costs of supplies, utilities, equipment and physical plant needs. The residents we care for are increasingly complex, both medically and behaviorally. As we care for higher skilled residents, we are also reducing the length of stay and rehospitalization rates. The Medicaid funding shortfall has to be addressed. Case Mix may be an answer, but only if the overall Medicaid shortfall is addressed.

Thank you for hearing testimony on this important topic.

Theresa Sanderson, CNHA FACHCA
Administrator