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CCHS

Southwest Iowa Mental Health Center

December 14, 2017

To the Health Policy Oversight Committee:

My name is Billie Butler. I am the Program Manager for the Integrated Health Program at Southwest Iowa Mental Health Center in Atlantic, Iowa. I have a background in Case Management and was also the Case Management Supervisor for our agency until we closed our program on June 30th, 2017, due to Managed Care Organizations taking case management in-house. Our agency made it through that transition, but now we are facing many of our members being taken out of our Integrated Health Program without any notice to the agencies or the members.

We started our Integrated Health Program in July of 2014. For three years, Integrated Health Programs have endured many significant changes. This program was started to ensure the needs of some of Iowa's most vulnerable people were being met. We address any physical needs that individuals may have, but we also address their mental health and social needs. United's decision to remove members from our Integrated Health Program has affected forty-five people from our Integrated Health Program. The majority of these are children and their families. There are very few CMH Waiver slots available for the children in Iowa. We also know that in rural Iowa there aren't enough service providers available that offer children's services. The Integrated Health Programs offer the children and their families support, guidance, and advocacy. Being able to offer families, a Family Peer Support Specialist makes a huge impact on the children and their families. This being taken away from them with no notice is insensitive, but most of all puts some of our most vulnerable people at risk.

I want to share how this change by United Healthcare will affect our members. Many of our low intensity members require a great deal of assistance to maintain their stability. We have many members that have medical issues and need the one-on-one support of our Integrated Health Nurse Care Manager. For example, we have a member that is considered a "low intensity" member. He is unable to walk without an assistive device of some type. He cannot drive himself places, so he relies on assistance setting up transportation. He used to have Habilitation staff, but is no longer financially eligible for that funding. This gentleman is new to town and doesn't know very many people. He can get on the waiting list for a waiver, but a slot won't likely be available to him for close to two years. He relies on the Integrated Health staff to assist him with getting to the store, helping him with transportation, reminding him of his appointments, and assisting him when there are problems with his medications. The Integrated Health staff was the people that assisted him with getting an apartment, furnishing that apartment, and setting up Homemaker services for him. If the Integrated Health Program is not available to him, who is going to help him with his daily living needs? A PCP's office or an

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ACO is not going to have the availability to go to this gentleman and meet with him to assist him with daily living needs. We need someone to act on behalf of these members. They trust their Integrated Health staff. Many of our members don't trust others easily, but we have built a relationship with them. We are the people day in and day out doing this work. We work hard and we do a good job. If you ever want to hear how things are really going for our agencies and our members, please reach out and talk to any of us. We would be happy to share our stories with you. Iowa can do better than this. The people we serve need help now. They can't wait for months for this to be resolved. They need a resolution now. Agencies across the state continue to have problems with reimbursement from the MCOs and this is just another blow to our organizations. I would encourage your committee to please do something to help these people. They deserve respect, fair treatment, and open communication. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Billie Butler". The signature is enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval shape.

Billie Butler
Integrated Health Program Manager