

Public Health Committee Members,

My friend John Hollis, a retired Connecticut Valley Hospital employee, and I have been speaking out publicly for five years on the impact of workplace bullying at CVH. The culture of bullying, perpetuated by CVH management and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, directly led to the abuse of the 59 year-old patient at Whiting Forensic Division. John and I obtained a copy of CVH's 2012 workplace bullying survey, which management tried to suppress after compiling the results.

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Connecticut Valley Hospital Workplace Bullying Survey Results

"I have encountered bullying situations at work." 70.6% of CVH workers "strongly agree". 20.7 % "agree".

"I have felt bullied when interacting with a CVH manager / supervisor." 59.9% "strongly agree". 16.5% "agree".

"I have felt bullied when interacting with a CVH manager / supervisor in my unit / program." 54.0 % "strongly agree". 16.2 % "agree".

"I have felt bullied when interacting with a CVH co-worker." 39.6% "strongly agree". 20.2 % "agree".

"I have felt bullied when interacting with a CVH co-worker in my unit / program." 37.5 % "strongly agree". 20.8 % "agree".

"I feel that bullying is an accepted part of the culture at CVH." 54.1 % "strongly agree." 25.7% "agree".

"I reported bullying and there was a positive resolution of my concerns." 61.6% "strongly disagree". 24.5% "disagree".

"I fear retaliation for reporting bullying or other hostile behavior." 66.6% "strongly agree". 17.1 % "agree".

John and I also have obtained data and internal emails from CVH, through Freedom of information Act requests. CVH terminates Black employees at a rate of 71%, compared to just 22% for whites. Black employees are disciplined at a rate of 10% more than all other workers combined, despite comprising a minority portion of the CVH employee population. Only 3% of the employees making \$120,000 or more

per year at CVH are Black. John was interviewed by the State Police Major Crime Unit, about the link between workplace bullying and the abuse of the Whiting patient.

Fox 61 correspondent Kaitlin Goslee reported that the station received an anonymous letter from a CVH employee, who said that CVH workers who initially reported staff abuse of the Whiting patient were disregarded by CVH management, and retaliated against. 10 employees have been arrested and 37 suspended, in connection with abuse of this patient.

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services commissioner Miriam Delphin-Rittmon gave her best babe in the woods response, when Goslee asked if Delphin-Rittmon was aware of the "culture of fear" at CVH. DMHAS is the subject of numerous employee lawsuits and Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities complaints, which DMHAS lawyers work hard to defeat. Delphin-Rittmon has full knowledge of these legal challenges; her only concern is DMHAS avoiding liability. I am assigned to the Battell Medical Records department at CVH. The management of this department has doubled down on bullying and racist policies, since the CVH patient abuse scandal exploded. One member of management recently taunted me on social media.

I must convey in the strongest terms that privatization would only exacerbate the problems at CVH. The quality of patient care would be even worse. Abuse of workers, who would have less protections, would increase, fueling the culture of abuse that has infected the patient at Whiting. Independent oversight of CVH and DMHAS is essential. CVH employees must have an open line of communication to this entity. CVH and DMHAS must not be allowed to police themselves. Allowing CVH and DMHAS to continue to operate with impunity will lead to tragedy. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

David Samuels

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