

Peter Tuccitto
93 Shawnee Rd
East Hartford, CT 06118
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Dear Members of the Public Health Committee: CVH Whiting Forensic Hospital Task Force:

First and foremost, I must condemn the mental health treatment of Bill Shehadi at Whiting Forensic Hospital which has been proven through video evidence and firsthand witness testimony.

As a taxpayer, voter, and a Certified Recovery Support Specialist with lived mental health challenges, I can attest to my experiences attaining and utilizing mental health resources in CT.

Since the State of Connecticut has adopted a recovery-oriented model of mental health care, then it follows that all facilities providing mental health services should be doing so according to that model. The State of Connecticut's Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) defines recovery as follows, "recovery is what people experience as they become empowered to manage their mental illness and/or substance use disorder in a manner that allows them to achieve a meaningful life and a positive sense of belonging in their community."

I myself have been treated for Bipolar Disorder many times within the in-patient and out-patient facilities of the IOL and UCONN. Every time I was treated with the focus of helping me recover and rejoin the community of my choice. It is my belief that while this may have been the focus at Whiting Forensic Hospital, it is clear the implementation failed.

Just today I was in a meeting of the Recovering Citizenship Learning Collaborative and heard a representative of CVH in-patient services discuss creating the culture of community created within in order to prepare the person in recovery for their reintegration to the community of their choice.

I believe the Public Health Committee: CVH Whiting Forensic Hospital Task Force should look at what is going on there and try to emulate that cultural shift.

Sincerely,

Peter Tuccitto