

State of Connecticut  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



CVH WHITING TASK FORCE

Meeting Summary

November 3, 2020

Co-chairwoman Linda Schwartz convened the meeting and asked members for comments regarding the two previous Informational Forums held on October 20, 2020 and October 27, 2020.

Mr. Lawlor expressed a sense of hopelessness coming from the patients.

Ms. Hauser noted that a psychological parallel process seemed evident throughout patient and staff testimonies. At times patients felt disrespected with staff also expressing similar feelings. Additionally, there were positive and negative testimonies from both groups.

Mr. Acker stated that he did not hear much positivity in the testimonies. He added that when one staff is there representing 30 people, he tends to believe them.

Ms. Alisberg noted that nothing we heard seemed hopeful. The patients are not involved in their own treatment plans, and discharges take years.

Dr. Rodis stated that the hospitals can upgrade their buildings and build them with a more structuring nature.

Ms. Schwartz stated that 16 hour shifts compromise care. She also added that you would not be able to run a facility in that manner in other agencies.

Mr. Acker added that the big question is whether institutional care is the right path.

Mr. Lawlor asked Sara Wakai from UConn Health Center and Tina Mohr from Legislative Management whether they have viewed any of the previous meetings on CT-N so that they can include questions raised in those meetings in the staff survey, such as racial disparities.

Ms. Wakai thanked Mr. Lawlor for the idea and stated that she will watch them.

Ms. Mohr explained that she is a contract attorney and that viewing meetings would not assist her purview.

The task force discussed at length the scope of the staff survey, including the contract between UConn Health Center and Legislative Management, and the content of the survey.

Mr. Lawlor asked if the deadline of the staff survey can be moved from March 2021 to January 2021.

Ms. Wakai clarified that March is not the deadline of the survey, but rather the deadline of the survey report. She added that the survey will not have a quick turnaround as it will require multiple drafts which the task force will see and approve. Since it is now November 3, 2020, she advised against a survey sent out in December.

Ms. Alisberg advised that the task force move ahead with other parts of their own report while waiting for the staff survey.

Mr. Lawlor explained that considering legislative deadlines, members have until early April to fill in the details of the report.

Discussion returned to the overview of the informational forums, where comments stated above were once again expressed by the members.

Ms. Alisberg emphasized that patient care should not be focused around medication and that other treatment plans should be considered.

Regarding discharge timelines, Ms. Hauser stated that it is important patients are safely discharged rather than discharging them unsafely only to meet percentage criteria. She added that if currently patients can't be discharged quicker, then it's possible to assist in that process if patients had a congregate structure available where they learn independent living until such time.

Members proceeded to extensively discuss the report required by [PA 18-86](#). They asked task force staff if they can send questions to previous presenters of the task force.

Task force staff advised that members should provide their broad recommendations to staff. Once the first draft of the recommendations has been reviewed, then members can decide if they would like to invite previous presenters or new ones.

Dr. Rodis stated that he is not sufficiently informed on the topic of forensic hospitals and would like to learn of national or international trends to inform the process of recommendations.

Staff advised members to formulate specific questions regarding national or international trends so that they may forward them to the Office of Legislative Research.

Mr. Acker stated that the task force has already heard from many presenters and has seen much information regarding CVH and Whiting. Considering the incident which created this task force happened three years ago, it is past time for members to begin writing.

The next task force meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 1:00 PM.