Colorado's Essential Health Benefit Benchmark Plan

Public Comment

July 31, 2012

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

My name is Grace Walsh. I am a psychiatric nurse who worked as a clinical administrator at the Colorado Mental Health Institute at Fort Logan, on the inpatient unit at Denver Health and most recently in the Psychiatric/ Drug and Alcohol Emergency Department at Denver Health.

I am so happy that Colorado is moving forward with the health exchange, and that both mental health and substance abuse services will be covered. There is such a need for a range of evidence based treatment modalities in this area along with rigorous outcome studies. How wonderful that many persons previously unable to access such services will now have the opportunity for treatment.

Both mental health and substance abuse treatment are critical and essential. Spend one night in the emergency department or look at the emergency department statistics, and it is clear that savings in human potential and money can be realized with sufficient insurance coverage that adequately addresses assessment and treatment.

I urge the decision makers to thoroughly review the specific evidence based treatment options available in the plans, and to chose as a benchmark, one that is truly comprehensive and equally weighted with the medical categories.

Thanks you for you time.

Grace Walsh, RN. MS