

**Additional
Letters of Support
Independence MHI**

October 9, 2009

225 EAST SIXTH STREET
WATERLOO, IOWA 50703

TONY THOMPSON, SHERIFF

OFFICE PHONE: (319) 291-2587
ADMINISTRATIVE FAX (319) 291-2541
JAIL FAX (319) 291-2569



SHERIFF
BLACK HAWK COUNTY

09-24-09

Dr. Dave Bhasker
2277 Iowa Avenue
Independence, Iowa 50644

Dr. Bhasker:

I am motivated to write this letter of support/encouragement for the staff and facilities at the Mental Health Institute- Independence, Iowa.

As the Sheriff of Black Hawk County, and chief administrator of one of the largest jailing facilities in the state of Iowa, I have an acute focus, respect and need for mental health services in the state. I openly recognize the resource and service that is MHI-Independence.

I can tell you that not only was I frustrated and shocked to hear about a potential closing of MHI-Independence, but am furious that we are moving in that direction, and not one of adding funding and renovating/building additional bedspace at the facility.

Currently, over half of my inmate population is on anti-psychotic, anti-depressant medication, and nearly 60% have been treated for mental health issues. I have an ever increasing need, certainly not a decreasing need for additional treatment, bedspace, and facilities. The most accessible, convenient, and consistent facility for our purposes is certainly MHI-Independence.

To whatever degree possible, I will champion an effort that not only defends a potential closure of your facilities, but focuses efforts to expand your capabilities once again. It is a travesty to see the large expanse of space available squandered due to lack of state and federal funding.

I see first hand the ever increasing need, and I pledge to you my energy and efforts in support of your facility.

Sincerely,

Anthony T. Thompson, Sheriff

IOWA DISTRICT COURT
First Judicial District

DUBUQUE COUNTY COURTHOUSE

720 CENTRAL AVENUE
DUBUQUE, IA 52001

TELEPHONE
(319) 589-4483

NANCY M. FISCHER
PATIENT ADVOCATE

September 25, 2009

Mental Health Institute Task Force
c/o Dr. Bhasker J. Dave
2277 Iowa Avenue
Independence, IA 50644

Dear Mental Health Institute Task Force Members:

I am writing in regard to the proposed closure of one of the four Iowa Mental Health Institutes.

I have been the court-appointed patient advocate for Dubuque County, Iowa, for the past 25 years. As patient advocate, I am assigned to represent the interests of any Dubuque County person involuntarily hospitalized by the court to receive psychiatric treatment and follow the patient throughout their treatment as an outpatient or inpatient until the closure of their court case.

Throughout my years as patient advocate, I have watched the Mental Health Institute in Independence, Iowa, change from a full-service hospital providing children, adolescent, geriatric, adult services and substance abuse treatment reduced down to children, adolescent and adult services. The reduction resulted in patients being served at greater distances for geriatric care at Clarinda and substance abuse/dual-diagnosis care at Mount Pleasant. Now, we are discussing the possibility of closing an entire hospital that will make access for families even more difficult for all patients in a particular area of the state.

The importance of the Mental Health Institute remaining open is seen in my community through long waiting lists for patients to be admitted to the Mental Health Institute; residential care and nursing home facilities unable to maintain patients seeking placement at the Mental Health Institute; and bed shortages at local hospitals. I am a strong supporter of community-based living for all my clients and would like all my clients living independently and successfully in the community, but patients still need the services of acute care and stabilization when their symptoms worsen or setbacks in treatment occur.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Nancy M. Fischer, Patient Advocate

CEDAR COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICE

CONNIE L. FETT, Director/CPC Administrator
MAUREEN KRUTZFELD, Administrative Assistant
PHONE: 563-886-3955 FAX: 563-886-6161

400 CEDAR ST, COURTHOUSE
TIPTON, IA 52772
E-mail: cfett@cedarcounty.org

October 1, 2009

To: MHI Task Force

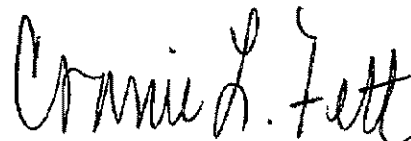
From: Connie L. Fett, LBSW
Cedar County CPC Administrator

Re: Public Comment

I was unable to attend the MHI Task Force Meeting at the Independence MHI on Monday, September 28th. I wish to extend my support to the staff and the services provided at the Independence MHI.

As a Central Point of Coordination Administrator, I find the services available at the MHI to be one of the best resources in Iowa. In 2004 I served on a MHI Study Group with the final report submitted to the MH/DD Commission. There have been several restructuring reports completed over the years, including 1994, 1996, 1998 and 2004. Each report had information that was pertinent then and is also true today. I support an expansion of the services provided at the MHI not decreasing or eliminating services. We are in a mental health care crisis. The crisis is the reduced community capacity to provide the long term or intensive mental health services needed. Since our 2004 MHI Study Report, we have community hospitals that have closed their psychiatric units and we have Residential Care Facilities that have either closed their PMI units or have closed entirely. The need for acute care services that are provided at the MHI's is only going to increase.

In this difficult economic time we must retain as many of our mental health resources as possible, not eliminate. I can appreciate the difficult task that is before you. Trying to balance the needs of a very vulnerable population and the escalating expenditures is daunting. I thank you for the opportunity to publicly lend my support to the Independence MHI.



Per telephone call 9-26-09

* Computers on woud not working or else I would have emailed this.

Mianda Monahan

Sharon Robinson ph 319232 0845

I have been a lifelong resident of Waterloo and the Institute has served many people for many years. It would be disaster if it were not there any longer, for the people who need MHI. It would be disaster for people with no insurance or bad insurance. I particularly think that the childrens programs are important. The state of Iowa needs more, not less resources for mentally ill people.

September 23, 2009

Timothy Main
Director of Social Services
Mental Health Institute
2277 Iowa Avenue
Independence, Iowa 50644

RE: Letter of Support to Mental Health Institute Task Force

Dear Tim:

Since I will not be able to attend the public forum on Monday, September 28, 2009, due to other commitments, I wanted to offer this letter of support for the Mental Health Institute, Independence, Iowa.

As a recently retired Juvenile Court Officer, I had many opportunities to utilize services available at the facility in Independence. Most often, I was using services for adolescents and children. MHI has had an effective evaluation program for both population groups as well as offering treatment alternatives. In addition to these programs, the campus has offered a youth shelter and residential treatment programs provided by Four Oaks.

Having served the youth of rural Northeast Iowa, treatment alternatives were always difficult to locate. The programming available at MHI, Independence has been the "closest in proximity" to family and home communities. The spectrum of services and alternatives offered a continuum of care, should there be a need in a particular case, such as shelter care and evaluation, placement in the PMIC program, etc. This programming has been a valuable service to youth, parents and referring agents.

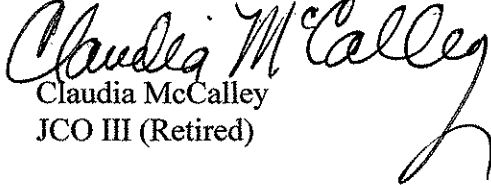
One of the most important services which has been provided by MHI, Independence is the evaluation programming. The Cromwell Children's Unit offers the most comprehensive and best evaluations for young children in the State of Iowa. Similarly, the Adolescent Unit offered safe, comprehensive evaluations for many juveniles.

While my experiences with the MHI, Independence is limited to services to adolescents and children, I feel it is essential that this programming continue. Serving the rural area is most important, offering a continuum of services to the youth populations has been

successfully practiced at the facility and the ability to obtain comprehensive evaluations in a safe and stable environment is a need which has been met at the MHI, Independence campus.

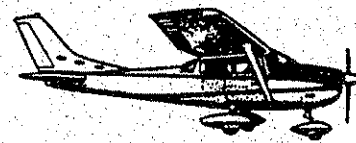
In these times of budget concerns it is important to remember that the clients served at the MHI's have the greatest needs. If programs and services are terminated, these clients will still have needs which have to be met. As changes are contemplated, this must be the measure which is used in evaluating programming decisions.

Respectfully submitted,


Claudia McCalley
JCO III (Retired)

Connell Aviation II Inc.

1684 230th St., P.O. Box 506
Independence, IA 50644
Phone: (319) 334-4000 Fax: (319) 334-2498



September 28, 2009

Mental Health Institute
2277 Iowa Ave.
Independence, Iowa 50644

Re: Mental Health Institute

Dear Ladies & Gentlemen,

My name is Karen Connell of Connell Aviation II, Inc., the fixed base operator at the Independence Municipal Airport. The airport has been at its present location since 1967, and over the years has seen continued growth for the community and area. The airport manager, Jim Connell, has been at this airport for over 41 years and has a good working relationship with the MHI management & staff.

Both Connell Aviation II and the Independence Airport are greatly affected by this institution, meeting their flying needs. Many families, residents, doctors, nurses and specialists who use the airport for convenient and efficient transportation. Other facilities such as law enforcement, in the surrounding counties and states also use this transportation means. Specialty doctors can increase their time on site, when they use small aircraft, charter service or helicopter flights. Transporting residents in a timely manner is often times an important factor also.

The State & Federal government has spent millions of dollars on the Independence Airport and part of the reason, was to provide service for the Mental Health Institute. To abandon MHI would put a big hole in the planning of the State & Federal government. MHI is a huge asset to our community and the excellent care of its residents in this facility, speaks highly of the dedicated staff. The various treatments and services provided are state-of-the-art.

The convenience of air travel to and from the Independence Municipal Airport, gives the residents and families the opportunity to see one another more frequently, to enhance the family unit. Let's continue to offer this service and convenience to those individuals, at the Mental Health Institute located here in Independence!!

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim & Karen".

Jim & Karen Connell
Connell Aviation II, Inc.
1684 - 230th St. P.O. Box 506
Independence, Iowa 50644

BUCHANAN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ELLEN GAFFNEY
MICHAEL L. FERRETER
RALPH J. KREMER



Buchanan County Court House
P. O. Box 317
Independence, Iowa 50644
buch_board@co.buchanan.ia.us
Phone: (319) 334-3578
Fax: (319) 334-4234

September 25, 2009

Dr. Bhasker Dave
2277 Iowa Avenue
Independence, Iowa 50644

Dear Dr. Dave,

Please see that the members of the MHI Task Force receive this letter.

The Buchanan County Supervisors wish to convey their support of keeping our MHI in Independence.

Buchanan County is surrounded by various highly populated counties that avail themselves of the services provided by the Independence MHI.

Our proximity to the four-lane highway and easy access to the airport has been very helpful for several extreme cases. Law Enforcement has relied on them and MHI in many instances.

Independence MHI has the Cromwell Unit where youth reside and receive treatment. The teachers and staff there have helped many struggling young people to become productive members of our society. We have the facilities and staff to meet their needs. This is a very important resource.

In case of fall-out, a breach, problems or terrorists at the Palo Nuclear Power Plant, the Independence MHI has been designated as the Congregate Care Facility for people in our region. They would provide housing and emergency services for workers.

Thank you for your time and consideration in hearing our concerns for the future of our much appreciated MHI facility.

Sincerely,

Buchanan County Board of Supervisors

Michael L. Ferreter

Michael L. Ferreter, Chair

Ralph J. Kremer

Ralph J. Kremer

Ellen Gaffney

Ellen Gaffney

09-25-2009

Mental Health Institute
Independence, Iowa
MHI - Task Force

When you are evaluating MHI, - ask yourself, - where is the last resort for Mental Health in Eastern Iowa? - without MHI - where will they go? - Nursing Homes in small towns, - and I know first hand that they do not have the personnel or the knowledge for treating these people who are severely troubled.

Eventually, I fear they
will be living under
bridges and on the streets.

Best regards to all the
wonderful hard working
staff. They are very
special devoted people
with a difficult job
to do.

Sincerely,
Darlene & Donald Hosier

2348 26th NW
Cedar Rapids Iowa
52405-1227

09-24-09

To Whom It May Concern,
My recommendation
to the task force is to
retain the MHS at
Independence, Ia. Closing
this facility would have
adverse effects on many
people who are in need of
the services provided here, i.e.
PMIC ward for children and
adults - etc. Plus causing a
greater distance from their
homes. Also many jobs would
be lost. This facility needs
to be retained. Thank you!

So always trust the Lord
because he is forever
our mighty rock.

Isaiah 26:4

Maureen Manglick
Jesup, Ia

Y083884