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October 28, 2009

Bill Gardam  
Division Administrator  
Mental Health and Disability Services Division  
Iowa Department of Human Services  
Hoover State Office Building  
1305 E. Walnut Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Mr. Gardam:

At the fall meeting of the Executive Council of the Iowa Psychiatric Society, held on October 15, 2009, the members discussed in detail the work of the Mental Health Institute Review Task Force that is charged with determining the closing of one of the state mental health Institutes. Given the apparent budget status of the state, the IPS Executive Council fully appreciates the need for cost cutting. However, we strongly feel that access to state mental health beds needs to be, at a minimum, held constant. Thus any service lost by closing an Institute must be compensated by an increase in the remaining facilities.

Access to psychiatric beds, state or private, is a critical shortage across Iowa. Mental health care for the citizens of Iowa would be enhanced if an increase in state beds were to be recommended by your group. The Executive Council of IPS would hope that a portion of the savings gained by the closure of an Institute could be utilized to expand mental health services in the three remaining facilities.

We appreciate the work you and the Task Force are doing to review the Institutes and want you to know that we would be available as a resource if you should need some input from a provider.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Smith, MD, President  
Douglas F. Steenblock, MD, President Elect  
Judith H. W. Crossett, MD, PhD, Past President  
Joyce A Vista-Wayne, MD, Member at Large  
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