

**The Executive Office of Governor John G. Rowland
State of Connecticut**

By His Excellency

John G. Rowland

Governor

Executive Order No. 17 A

WHEREAS, mental illness is a serious healthcare problem for many Connecticut residents, as evidenced by the fact that during the last year over 37,041 adults were treated by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services for serious, persistent mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General has issued a report entitled "Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General;" and

WHEREAS, mental illness of less severe levels affects a large proportion of the Connecticut adult population and their families; and

WHEREAS, mental illness of any form among Connecticut's youth is extraordinarily damaging to every sphere of their development, if not identified or treated; and

WHEREAS, the population expected to be cared for by the public mental health system is expanding in terms of its numbers and the complexity of the conditions to be treated; and

WHEREAS, an effective strategy for addressing mental illness requires a comprehensive approach including prevention, early identification and treatment, and a continuum of care which includes a spectrum of community support and hospital services.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, John G. Rowland, Governor of the State of Connecticut, acting by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the statutes of this state, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

That there is hereby created a Blue Ribbon Commission on Mental Health (hereinafter Commission) to study the issue of mental illness and make recommendations on how the State can improve prevention efforts and treatment services.

1. Emphasis shall be placed on determining:
 - How the mental health, child welfare and criminal justice service systems can work together more effectively;

- How the state can maximize the collaboration of state agencies and the academic and private communities with expertise in the area of mental health; and
- Potential applications of new knowledge in the areas of prevention and earlier identification of mental illness;
- The treatment approaches that need to be emphasized and more effectively used as the state incorporates increased community-based treatment;
- The major successes and challenges of the public mental health system from both the national and Connecticut perspectives; and
- The perspectives of the advocacy and consumer communities as to what is in the best interest of consumers and their families.

- That [the Commissioner the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services] Dr. Albert Solnit shall serve as Chairperson of the Commission. That the Dean of Yale Medical School shall serve as Honorary Chairperson.

- That the Chairpersons will be assisted by Co-Chairs (the Commissioner of Children and Families and the [Deputy] Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services) by a Steering Committee composed of
3. the Commissioners of Social Services, Corrections, Public Health, Education; the Chief Court Administrator; the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management; and five experts from the mental health field to be appointed by the Governor.

- That the Commission shall be comprised of no more than 50 persons from the medical community, not for profit and service organizations involved in the field of mental health and government and community leaders appointed by the Governor.
- 4.

- That the following persons may also be invited to serve on the Commission: the Chief State's Attorney, Chief Public Defender, Probate Court Administrator, Psychiatric Security Review Board's Executive Director,
5. Commissioners from the Insurance Department, Department of Mental Retardation, the Office of Health Care Access, and legislators with expertise or interest in mental health issues.

- That the Commission shall be staffed by members of the Office of Policy and Management, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Department of Children and Families.
- 6.

- That the Commission shall report back to the Governor on its conclusions and recommendations on or before [July] August 1, 2000.
- 7.

- That this Order shall take effect immediately.
- 8.

Dated in Hartford, Connecticut this 7th day of June 2000.

John G. Rowland
JOHN G. ROWLAND, Governor

Filed this 7th day of June, 2000..

SUSAN BYSIEWICZ, Secretary of
the State



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