



1 Pillsbury Street, Suite 200 Concord, NH 03301-3570 603-225-6633 FAX 603-225-4739

**STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF HB 400 AND AMENDMENT #1495s
April 25, 2017**

The NH Community Behavioral Health Association supports HB 400, which calls for a new Ten-Year Mental Health plan, and Senator Bradley's amendment #1495s, which proposes new beds, new mobile crisis teams and new programs to address the mental health crisis in our state. A number of these provisions will help with the ongoing emergency room boarding problem, as adults and children with psychiatric issues wait for beds at NH Hospital for days or even weeks on end.

NHCBHA supports these specific provisions of the proposed amendment:

- 20 new DRF beds for 2 years
- 40 new transitional and community residential beds with wraparound services
- 8 new peer crisis respite beds
- New Mobile Crisis Units
- An integrated data management system with real-time information on the availability of involuntary and voluntary psychiatric beds in the state
- An independent evaluation of the capacity of the current system to respond to the inpatient, acute care psychiatric needs of patients

We ask that the workforce issues we have advocated for in the state budget and in policy bills still in play are seriously considered along with HB 400. New programs and new beds won't help unless we have the people to staff them. We saw this two years ago when 10 crisis beds at NH Hospital were funded in the state budget but not stood up in a timely manner because the state could not find the nurses needed to staff them.

Finally, we want to point out that the workforce issue for our community mental health centers won't be fully addressed until Medicaid rates for services are increased beyond the 2006 level.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work on this critical issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suellen M. Griffin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Suellen Griffin, President