

# **Written Public Comment**

**(received before 08/25/21)**

## **Testimony to the Trust Authority Board, 8/23/21**

### **It is my understanding The Mental Health Trust Authority is in the planning stages of funding an exit poll of Trust beneficiaries in acute care psychiatric facilities or units. Following are my suggestions for survey questions:**

There are organizations like NAMI that could give anecdotal information of psychiatric patient satisfaction concerning their stay in a locked facility

A survey of individuals that have been locked in a psychiatric facility or been subjected to a forced evaluation could also be conducted at the Consumer Webb.

A survey of patient satisfaction could be conducted at state-run Alaska Psychiatric Institute by API staff. The same survey should be conducted by an independent group at a later date for comparison.

There should be two surveys—each one a month apart and each survey would have separate questions so as to not overburden a patient with too many questions, but still get sufficient data.

There should be some incentive given to patients who participate in a survey: a bag of cookies, a candy bar, anything to entice the patient to participate.

Following are some of the questions that I would ask individuals that have been in acute care psychiatric facilities or have been picked up by the police and transported to a psychiatric facility.

“If you were picked up by the police and transported to a psychiatric unit, how were you treated during transportation?”

“Were you told by hospital staff that you have a right by state law to bring your grievance to an impartial body?”

“Are you afraid to file a grievance?”

“Have you been told that there is a trained patient advocate who must assist you?”

“How many times have you gone outdoor in the fenced-in courtyard?”

“Have you been informed how to get in touch with the patient advocate?”

“Has the staff put their hands on you?”

“Were you satisfied with your hospital treatment plan?”

“Were you satisfied with the grievance process?”

“Are you homeless?”

“Were you injured during treatment or transportation?”

“Have you talked to a social worker?”

“Have you been intimidated by the staff?”

“Have you been able to use the phone a reasonable amount of time?”

“Have you been able to send and receive unopened mail?”

**Reference Information:** The Recovery Support Specialist (RSS) at the state-owned Alaska Psychiatric Institute released the results of a patients’ survey in 2008. “Twenty-one percent of the patients were afraid to file a complaint or a grievance and nineteen percent did not answer the question.” A reasonable person would say that up to 40% of the psychiatric patient at API in 2008 did not feel free to discuss their complaints and injuries.

State law AS47.30.847 states that patients have a right to bring their grievance to an impartial body and that there must be a trained patient advocate to assist patients in filing a grievance. API managers have made a point of not telling psychiatric patients those facts or included those patient rights in hospital policies that are given to patients.

Patients at API must have a reasonable opportunity for outdoor exercise—a portion of the floor in the fenced-in courtyard is heated and there is an awning which makes them suitable for four seasons.

There are over 10,000 people each year that are taken to acute care psychiatric facilities or units. As of now, the state does not know what happens to patients in private facilities, which makes the patient survey a necessity.

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**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Monday, August 23, 2021 7:49:11 AM

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Please accept this email as my public comment for the upcoming board meeting on 8/25/21.

*I am 100% opposed to mineral exploration in the Ester Dome area. This past Saturday's meeting w/ Millrock officials was insulting to say the least. Clearly, Millrock officials think that we- residents of the Goldstream Valley- are morons. The meeting amounted to 2+hrs of lip service.*

*Officials said things like "we care about the community" "how can we improve the trail system" "if we don't act on this some other company is going to . . ." so on and so forth.*

*If you truly care about the community, the land, etc., it's very simple: cease all operations immediately, pack up your equipment, and remove your operations from the Goldstream Valley. We don't want you here.*

*The MTH organization is NOT looking out for the best interests of the community. In fact, they're doing the exact opposite. Short term gain, long term problems. You people should be ashamed of yourselves.*

*Chris McDevitt  
Proud Goldstream Valley Resident*