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House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

18TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

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PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE
PENNSYLVANIA ATHLETIC
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

January 8, 2008

Janice Staloski, Director
Bureau of Community Program Licensure
and Certification
Department of Health
132 Kline Plaza, Suite A
Harrisburg, PA 17104

RECEIVED
2008 JAN 11 AM 9:05
INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Janice Staloski,

Once again, I am writing to you to express my strong objections to the Department of Health's proposed regulations regarding confidentiality of drug and alcohol addiction treatment records and personal information. (Department of Health, Proposed Regulation 10-186)

The new proposed regulations, unfortunately, are no better than the original draft circulated back in February 2007. While the first version rescinded 4 PA Code Section 255.5(b) regarding confidentiality protections, this proposal accomplishes the same by replacing the state rules with the ambiguous federal regulations.

Both throw open the doors to exposure of ever more personal and intrusive information.

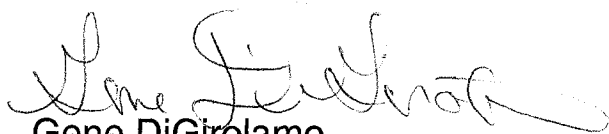
These changes are entirely unnecessary. For payers, Pennsylvania's Act 106 of 1989 already defines what is necessary before an insured can obtain coverage for addiction treatment and the Pennsylvania Client Placement Criteria and the Pennsylvania Client Placement Criteria Summary Sheet specify the data to be provided for medical necessity reviews in HealthChoices/Medicaid and for others.

Over the years, I've been forced to learn a lot about this problem and how hard it is on the sick person and family alike. It has taken me many years – and the recovery of my son – to be able to talk about the problem of my own family.

People with untreated drug and alcohol problems are often embarrassed and stay out of treatment for far too long as it is.

Let's not make this situation worse. Let's hold the line on privacy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gene DiGirolamo".

Gene DiGirolamo
State Representative
18th Legislative District

cc: PA Advisory Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
House Health and Human Services Committee