

Cove Forge Behavioral Health System
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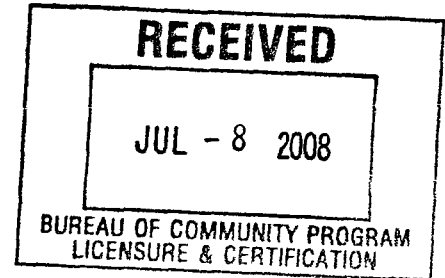
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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION



July 3, 2008

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

Dear Ms. Staloski:

I am writing as a follow up to my previous letter dated January 7, 2008 regarding the proposed changes in 4 PA Code Section 255.5 (b). I want to reiterate that I am opposed to any change in the current code.

The present code has served well to protect the population we serve from the Stigma associated with Drug and Alcohol Addiction. It is my belief that any change in that will put at risk this protection and serve as a serious roadblock for our folks to seek treatment.

The belief in confidentiality has long been a prerequisite for patients to disclose what they need to disclose in order to get the treatment they need. Changes in the code will deter people from seeking help and if they do seek treatment from disclosing information.

The current Code has worked well. It safeguards the privacy of individuals seeking help and provides enough information to make reasonable clinical and placement judgments. Facilities are staffed by competent and trained individuals who are able to use the current code to provide appropriate information without compromising the individual's trust.

Changes to the 4 PA code Section 255.5 (b) would represent a step backward in the treatment of addiction in the state of PA. At a time when this is clearly one of our largest health problems, to do something that would provide a roadblock to accessing treatment would impact the fight against this disease.

Please consider this along with the comments from my earlier referenced letter to support 4 PA Code Section 255.5(b) in its current form without changes or amendments.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Thomas J. Callahan, MA LPC
Regional Director WDR\Cove Forge

CC: Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Representative Frank Oliver
Senator Edwin Erickson
Representative George Kenney
Senator Vincent Hughes