



Treatment Trends, Inc.

18-22 S. SIXTH STREET P.O. BOX 685 ALLENTOWN, PA 18105

◆ Confront ◆ Keenan House ◆ Halfway Home of Lehigh Valley
◆ Richard S. Csandl Recovery House ◆ LC TCAP ◆ NC TCAP

COPY

July 11, 2008

#2654.

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

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

2008 JUL 15 AM 10:03

RECEIVED

Re: Department of Health Reg. No. 10-186
Confidentiality of Patient Records and Information

Dear Ms. Staloski,

I am strongly opposed to the proposed changes in the Department of Health's Regulation No. 10-186 regarding confidentiality of drug and alcohol addiction treatment patient records. It is imperative that the final regulations protect the rights and confidentiality of information of those in treatment. Please consider that the proposed changes would have the following detrimental outcomes:

- They exceed the federal standards under 42 CFR by allowing broad access to court ordered release of records without patient consent.
- The changes would require providers to give unnecessary personal information to insurance and third party payers. This undermines PA Placement Criteria.
- Information about vital signs, lab test results, motivation for treatment, behavioral information can and will be used by insurance companies to delay or deny treatment at a critical time of need.
- The definitions of "government officials" is vague and would allow wide access to confidential records through this unspecific definition.
- These standards require a much larger amount of information than the current five points in current regulations. There will be a cost increase for increase in treatment provider staff time for documentation and record maintenance under these new regulations.
- It would keep fewer of those in addiction from seeking the treatment services they need for fear that treatment information will not remain confidential but be given to legal entities such as probation and parole; and insurers.



These are important regulations that allow people to get treatment. The changes take away vital protections and I ask that you please withdraw them. The replacement of our current standards with those proposed will result in the loss of a critical protection to privacy rights for those persons suffering from this highly stigmatized disease and therefore, many who need it will not seek treatment. Thank you.

Sincerely,



John E. Dillensnyder III
Fiscal Manager

cc: Robert C. Csandl, TTI Executive Director
Independent Regulatory Review Commission
Representative Frank Oliver
Representative George Kenney
Senator Edwin Erickson
Senator Vincent Hughes