

Dear Ms. J. Kate Burkhart,
Exc. Dir.—AMHB,

March 25, 2008

Thank you for the letter of March 21, '08.

You may or may not have a misunderstanding of Behavioral Health's four pages of Grantee grievance procedure requirements. **On page 2:**

“8-c. Satisfactory resolution to grievances within 30 days of receipt of grievance.

- d. Referral to BH, within 5 business days, for technical assistance with grievances that remain unresolved after 30 days.”

All unresolved grievances and all grievances unresolved to the satisfaction of the patient are supposed to be forwarded to Behavioral Health. But out of the 50 or so grantee grievance procedures, 98% either say nothing or only say they will only forward a unresolved grievance to Behavioral Health and omit the important fact that grantees are supposed to also forward any grievance unresolved to the satisfaction of the patient to Behavioral Health.

Less than 10 grievances have been forwarded to Behavioral Health for technical assistance by psychiatric facilities (including API) in the last 4 years. We are surprised even that many have been forwarded because facilities get to choose if they want to. Over 98% of psychiatric patients are not even informed they can contact Behavioral Health for assistance. (And there is no specific office to call.)

Any reasonable person could look and see that the grantee grievance procedures are not fair to psychiatric patients. And that includes the Behavioral Health requirements.

Many, many psychiatric patients are sick—dementia, diminished capacity. Some have been sick since early childhood. Many have been abused through many forms to the point that they accept abuse—it becomes part of their existence.

It is the job of the more fortunate to change the system. Those with a severe mental illness are not going to come forward.

We would ask that you help with improving patient rights. Thank you,

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Cc : Open Letter

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