

Dear Karleen Jackson, PhD.,  
Commissioner, DHSS,

December 31. '07

For good reason we ask for a “yes” or “no” answer from the state, (DHSS).—

1. “Does Providence Hospital’s (Anchorage) single point of entry for psychiatric patients have to abide by and comply with AS47.30.847 (Psychiatric patients’ grievance procedure statute)?”

Please answer “yes” or “no”.

In a recent conversation with Mr. Ronald Adler of API /Behavioral Health –Mid December—he stated that the state was going to get a legal opinion so they could supply us with a definitive answer. We need something stronger than “understanding”; we need a statement of fact.

In conversation, Mr. Adler, after reading the statute, stated unofficially that he didn’t believe Providence had to follow AS 47.30.847 and as we mentioned before, Providence’s attorney stated that Providence does not have to follow the statute. The reason given: the statute refers to psychiatric treatment facilities—Providence hospital does not fit that description—the statute does not mention psychiatric units within a hospital.

On a separate issue concerning the last paragraph of your letter; that if we have a problem concerning Providence Hospital’s single point of entry’s grievance procedure, that we should deal with Providence—We don’t believe the state (DHSS) has the right to permanently delegate its responsibility to protect psychiatric patients, investigate complaints and do oversight.

In closing, please answer the first question – “yes” or “no”.

Thank you,

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Cc: Ombudsman’s Office  
Open letter

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