

## PUBLIC HEARING

UNH Cooperative Extension Conference Room  
3855 Dartmouth College Hwy.  
N. Haverhill, NH 03774  
November 22, 2010

PRESENT: Commissioner Michael Cryans, Executive Director Julie Clough, and Secretary Jeri Martino

OTHERS PRESENT: Omer Ahern, Wayne Fortier, Bernie Marvin, Bryan Patanovich, Mary Tyler, Sarah Leavitt-Doubleday, Mike Simpson, Eileen Bolander, Bill Sharp, Burton Williams, Phil Preston, Catherine Mulholland, Bernie Benn, Suzanne Laliberte, Sue Ford, Nancy Bishop, Suzanne Smith, Mary Cooney, Sue Almy, Edmond Gionet, Rick Ladd, Lyle Bulis, Rich Crocker, Chuck Townsend, Andy White, Frank Gould, Robert Blechl, Laurie Harding, Harold Brown, Jim Aguiar, John Gregg and Beatrice Pastor-Bodmer.

Commissioner Cryans opened the meeting at 10:10 and said that Commissioners Burton and Richards could not attend. He said that this public hearing was called to discuss appropriating \$200,000 to the Nursing Home from the undesignated fund balance. He asked that people keep their comments brief so that everyone could have a chance to speak and then turned the meeting over to NHA Bolander.

NHA Bolander said that running a nursing home and accepting Medicare/Medicaid means that you have to follow strict guidelines from the federal government. She reviewed what the increased regulations and mandates were and said that they are all consuming and demanding on the time of the staff. She said that standards have to be met in order to pass the yearly surveys. She noted that acuity has increased dramatically. NHA Bolander gave some statistics which pertained to the 126 resident currently residing at the nursing home. Of those 126, 119 need assistance to bathe, 107 need 1 or more staff to help them dress, 101 need 1 or more to transfer, 100 need 1 or more to help them use the toilet and 61 need help with feeding.

She said that on one floor there are 20 residents that need help with feeding and 3 LNA's to do so. She said that it can take up to two hours to accomplish this.

Documentation is another big issue and if the RN's are helping the LNA's they can sometimes forget to document their treatments even though they have done them.

NHA Bolander said that she feels that she had brought forth this information to the Delegation at previous budget hearings so as to inform everyone of what was coming down the pike if the budget was to remain level and now its here.

NHA Bolander said that she is requesting this \$200K supplemental appropriation in order to bring the proper standards back in line.

NHA Bolander said she is appealing the results of the survey with the feds, who she said

overruled the survey by the State. She said that she felt that the federal government did not follow the proper rules and therefore she is appealing. She said that the nursing home must either comply with regulations and guidelines or get out of the business.

Rep. Harding said that she was sympathetic with what NHA Bolander is going through and said that she suspects that the nursing home doesn't have the staff to be able to change the physical positions of some of the residents in order to keep away bedsores.

Harold Brown said that minutes from September quoted NHA Bolander as saying that the results of the survey did not have to do with the budget. She replied that was before she did an actual analysis on the problem.

Mr. Brown then asked about the needs for more Dietary staff even though the nursing home is no longer providing any meals to the Jail. NHA Bolander said that meal reduction to the Jail only began in the spring and the meal budget has been reduced \$100K.

She stated that the Dietary staff is needed in serving the meal and not as much in preparation.

Rep. Smith asked if the level of health of residents has changed in the last few years and NHA Bolander said that residents are staying in their homes longer and are coming into the nursing home in the advanced stages of their illnesses, which has increased the acuity of the patients.

Rep. Williams wondered about the letter that NHA Bolander had sent to them and said that he didn't think that the nursing home had been denied things but had been asked to hold the line.

NHA Bolander said that the only responsible thing to do, as Administrator in this situation, would be to cut the census in order to maintain proper care. A reduced census would be reduced revenue.

Rep. Bulis asked what the implications would be on an annual basis as this request only covers a six month period. He also asked about the nursing home adopting some technology to be able to do the documentation at the time of the treatment which would make it more efficient. He also asked about the wound care nurse which the survey report said only worked two days a week.

NHA Bolander said they were lucky to have a wound care nurse at all even though she does only work a few days a week.

She then said that all the nurses do their work by computer and there is very little pen to paper work. She did not have the figures calculated for a full year's budget.

Rep. Almy said she didn't understand the need to require so much documentation that it would take time away from care. She then asked if NHA Bolander does hire new people could they expect that the census will increase. NHA Bolander said she would try her best to make that happen.

Rich Crocker said that there has been a downshift to the nursing homes from the state and

because of the budget neutrality factor and the rates changing so much, there is going to continue to be problems. He said that the state is protecting themselves and he feels a need to address the problem now.

Rep. Ladd asked about the possibility of getting the creation of meals for the Jail back into the hands of the nursing home and thought that would be a more efficient way of doing things and result in not having to use more money at the Jail to create meals. Director Clough said that the Jail is not spending more money on food than they were before as their meals from the nursing home were costing \$3 per inmate per meal.

Rep. Ladd asked if the acuity is unique to Grafton County or are other County Nursing Homes experiencing the same thing. NHA Bolander said that it's the same with the other County nursing homes.

Rep. White asked if there was a resident to staff guideline industry standard and NHA Bolander said there is not in nursing homes.

Rep. Almy asked if there was any additional funding for Alzheimer's and NHA Bolander said there was not.

There was a discussion about the LNA class that was penalized by the survey and is no longer allowed to be held at the County. Rep. Harding said that having a class is not only a help to staff but also a help to morale. She said that cutbacks have created a very difficult situation for the nursing home and that it was important to be mindful of the future.

Rep. Williams said that he thinks there ought to be some pushback on the paperwork requirements.

Harold Brown asked how many nurses were let go because of protocols and NHA Bolander said so far one and that the standards are extremely high and she had to be let go. She was not a traveling nurse.

With no further questions, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 AM

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Raymond S. Burton, Clerk