



Marcia Knapp of NAMI Ohio Testimony

Ohio Senate Finance Subcommittee on Health & Medicaid

May 15, 2019

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Wednesday, May 15, 2019

Chairman Hackett, Vice Chair Huffman, Ranking Minority Member Thomas, Members of the Ohio House Finance Committee on Health and Medicaid, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today.

My name is Marcia Knapp and I am here today to tell my story of the painful loss of our son Adam.

- Adam battled schizophrenia from 2004 to 2010 when he stopped taking his medication.
- He left home in Dublin and drove to New York during his final episode. He was hospitalized in New York for 3 weeks and released against our wishes, after barely being medicated and not stable. After returning home, the next day, he attempted suicide. He was admitted to Riverside Hospital. After 5 days, still very paranoid and again against our wishes, they released him. I sat in the doorway at home due to his paranoia the entire night until he finally asked to go to OSU hospital. Less than a week and still very paranoid and against my strong wishes, they released him. 3 hospital stays without proper medication and proper treatment time. There was nowhere else in our community to take him. The only place was home. Unknown to me, he left with his car keys and then drove day and night to Seattle, WA, where he drove head on into another vehicle. He and the other driver died.
- My husband and I did not want other parents to live the “Hell on earth” that we did with the care our son.
- Therefore, we got involved with NAMI Ohio. As a member of the Board of Directors, we advocated to do something to give people a place to go when they’re released from the hospital. Last year, we opened the Adam-Amanda Mental Health Rehabilitation Center in Athens, Ohio. People leaving the hospital after a short stay can now spend up to 90 days in a rehabilitation center getting the treatment they need and preparing them to move back into the community. This helps break the revolving door of going into the hospital, being discharged and going right back.
- More importantly, I am convinced that if Adam had a rehabilitation center, he would still be with us today.
- Governor DeWine has recognized that we must expand crisis response and make sure people are stabilized before they are released into the community. NAMI Ohio has advocated for this for years. Now the Governor has heard our plea.
- The House of Representatives approved the Governor’s request for crisis response and I’m asking you to support the Governor’s budget.



- For too many years, mental illness has been ignored. We lose 5 people a day to suicide here in Ohio. We can stop this tragedy if a person in crisis has a place to go or to be seen. Too often they sit in emergency rooms for hours and hours or even worse, they are sent to jail.
- I ask you as a mother who lost a son to support the Governor's budget so other mothers and fathers don't have to experience the pain that we are still living.
- Thank you.