

Dianne Foley
Testimony on HB 33
Supporting the DD Workforce

My daughter has resided at Hattie Larlham for the past 35 years in the same Unit and in the same room the entire time. I know from personal experience that the DSP staff that takes care of my daughter 24/7 have been alarmingly overworked and understaffed especially in the past 3 COVID years. The safe ratio of DSP to resident is 1 to 6. Yet due to staff quitting and inability to hire more at competitive pay the ratio is generally 1 to 12. There have been times when there was only one DSP on the entire Unit of 24 residents for an entire shift! All residents are non-ambulatory, severely brain damaged and none can talk. They cannot call out for help. When there are no DSPs on duty in their rooms or nearby, no one can hear the monitors that many are hooked up to when they beep alarms. My daughter was severely sick last week. I spent every day in her room. I saw first hand how the DSPs and the seriously over-worked and understaffed nurses had to run around nonstop trying to just get their jobs done let alone care for emergencies. My daughter was tethered to an oxygen tank, a pulse-ox, and another machine that assists breathing. She is also tube fed. Thankfully the brilliant staff of DSPs and nurses on duty were able to find time to give her the help she needed, but to do so they were stretched too thin. I understand that Hattie Larlham just lost another key staffer - their nurse practitioner -leaving the nursing staff again overworked and understaffed. Staff retention is a big problem and increased funding will help fairly compensate these heroes who are the mainstay at HLC. HLC has had to resort to agency replacements and this has cost the Center well over a million dollars over budget. This cannot continue. HLC must be supported by the Ohio legislature. with increased funding for critical support staffing wages. My daughter and others must be able to live there with the care that HLC is proud to say is the best possible.

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