

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Janet Wood](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)  
**Date:** Monday, June 30, 2014 4:43:32 PM

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-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]  
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2014 1:24 PM  
To: Sunset Advisory Commission  
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Monday, June 30, 2014 - 13:24

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

First Name: Anna

Last Name: Gray

Title: President

Organization you are affiliated with: Texas Catalyst for Empowerment

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

In looking at the mental health system one thing that is missing is the fact that people can and to recover from mental health issues. For many recovery will include ongoing supports and services. Recovery is the ability to live full lives in the community with all of the rights and responsibilities of full participation in society. For some that may mean being completely out of services or using natural supports in the community.

Services exist that provide this such as preventive services where people are seen as capable and equipped to live accordingly. Resiliency programs such a Focus for Life, where people get self responsibility and hope. Peer run programs in the community where people with lived experience of mental health issues who are thriving in their communities serve as guides and roll models for others, Peer Crisis Services where people are served in their communities and encouraged in their recovery as opposed to hospitalization.

Texas has barely begun to look at mental wellness and peer services as preventive interventions to avoid hospitalization and forensic commitments.

One thing that is extremely important to keep in mind when looking to serve Texas Citizens with mental health issues is that the Texas system is illness based. You have to be really sick to get in and stay sick to keep services. There is no such thing as "VOLUNTARY" admission to a state hospital. You have to meet the criteria for commitment to even get in the door. It is misleading to report on voluntary admissions to hospitals.

It is also important to note that the treatment for substance use and mental health are very different and there is no one size fits all.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

Significantly expand mental health Certified Peer Training programs and recovery opportunities in local communities. Use Crisis Peer Respite and full Peer Run Crisis services to prevent hospitalization. Have the public mental health system be fully recovery based and make it accessible for people who want the help.

Above all, have recovery through person centered recovery planning be the expected outcome of all mental health treatment in the state.

Have people with lived experience (who have been diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder) be on every decision making body that address any services issues in the State. Include Texas Catalyst for Empowerment at every table that impacts people with lived experience.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree