



January 7, 2016

Richard Whitley, Director  
State of Nevada Department of Health and Human Services  
4126 Technology Way, Suite 100  
Carson City, Nevada 89780-2009

Dear Director Whitley:

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you on January 4, 2016 to discuss the concerns of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Nevada. As we discussed, we are very interested in the current status of Nevada Medicaid as it relates to access to mental health services and compliance with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA). We also support your ongoing efforts to reduce unnecessary institutionalization in jails and prisons, as well as expanding supportive housing and employment through Medicaid. NAMI Nevada believes this should be a priority before expanding Medicaid managed care to additional frail and vulnerable populations, many of whom also have a mental health diagnosis.

It is important to reiterate that NAMI Nevada does not oppose Medicaid managed care. However, we are concerned the Medicaid managed care expansion enabled in section 37 of S.B. 514 was added with little or no opportunity for community input. Additionally, the language of the bill does not even require that there be community involvement in the development of this new program. This has many in the community concerned about the influence of managed care plans on this whole process.

We are very grateful that you saw fit to require a series of town hall meetings to solicit public input for this transition, as well as welcome the involvement of NAMI Nevada directly in this process. We also appreciate the efforts of you and your staff to make sure that this is done in as transparent a process as possible to allay concerns of consumers, family members, advocates and providers that will be affected by this change. We believe these types of program changes are needed, but should include meaningful community involvement in the design, planning, implementation and oversight of Medicaid mental health services. NAMI Nevada can provide a wealth of knowledge and expertise and is ready to assist your efforts to improve Medicaid mental health services.

NAMI Nevada also appreciates your efforts to assist us by expediting the sub-grant. This support has been fundamental to our efforts to elevate the standing of NAMI Nevada as an educational and advocacy organization for consumers and family members. We are also very interested in pursuing other grant opportunities that align with our mission and purpose.

Again, thank you. We look forward to working with Kathryn Baughman as our point of contact. We also look forward to expanding our collaboration with the Department in 2016.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ginger Paulsen in blue ink.

Ginger Paulsen  
Executive Director

Handwritten signature of Sandra Stamates in blue ink.

Sandra Stamates  
President

Handwritten signature of Charles Duarte in blue ink.

Charles Duarte  
Board Member