

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION
for *Home Care, Inc*

May 7, 2003

Letter to the Editor
New Haven Register
40 Sargent Drive
New Haven, CT 06405

Dear Editor,

Your recent article [“State budget cuts seen endangering homebound patient welfare,” April 27] identified the threat to Connecticut’s strategy of placing some mentally ill persons at home instead of institutions. Specially trained psychiatric home care nurses have been very successful in ensuring that these patients continue to take their medications, which is a necessary part of ensuring that these folks can remain in the community.

In spite of their vital role, we estimate that psychiatric home care nurses’ salaries were \$53,680 for a standard workweek last year. Due to the nursing shortage, many nurses work more than a standard workweek, similar to nurses in hospitals, police officers, etc.

Home care is not only the preferred alternative for the patient, it is also cost effective for the taxpayer. The cost of home visits is consistently below the cost of the same type of care in an institution.

Members of the Connecticut Association for Home Care (CAHC) take great pride in the quality and value of our services to patients and their communities, and we are concerned that this needed service may be put in jeopardy. We remain hopeful lawmakers will realize that Medicaid payments for home care have not been keeping up with costs, that we face a serious shortage of nurses in Connecticut and that our most vulnerable citizens will suffer unless something is done.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Ellsworth
President & CEO
CT Association for Home Care

(The Connecticut Association for Home Care represents 62 licensed home care agencies providing care and services to over 40,000 elderly and chronically ill Connecticut residents.)