

Tara Enman
Jay
LD 1761

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Tara Enman, I live in Jay and have been an employee at Riverview Psychiatric Center for over 5 years. I thank you all for this opportunity to testify and for our voices to be heard.

During my years at this facility, I have been involved in 2 assaults one in which my hair was pulled out of my head as a patient entangled their hand in my braided hair as well as being grabbed by the neck of my shirt as a patient swung on me. Thankfully both of these incidents took place at a time that we had enough staff to assist, and I was not seriously injured. I have also witnessed several of my co-workers be seriously injured and have to leave in an ambulance. Some of these people were not able to return to work for several months, even more than a year, others were not able to return due to their injuries. The verbal abuse we endure on a regular basis can be just as debilitating and causes emotional stress which can also lead to several health-related issues.

The physical and mental toll this career takes on us is extremely difficult as we get older and our bodies change, even for the healthiest and physically fit, it is a proven fact that after 50, muscle, ligaments and tendons change. As a result of these changes (which include increased dehydration and brittleness), adults over 50 experience increased healing time. Not to mention reaction time decreases with age as well. Therefore, as we get older, we are at a higher risk especially for those that are still working at this facility after having previous work-related injuries/trauma due to being assaulted by patients.

All of us here at Riverview work together with the utmost compassion and empathy for our patients as we also are putting ourselves and lives on the line every day that we arrive to work. I am in high hopes that we too as employees of Riverview Psychiatric Center can get the support and compassion we deserve after dedicating our lives to one of the sickest populations in the state. Thank you again for hearing my testimony and please support this legislature.

Sincerely,
Tara Enman