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Treatment by Prayer Alone

Sec. 17a-543(i)-1. Application procedures

Any person admitted to an inpatient facility for the treatment of a mental illness, except a person committed for the restoration of criminal competency under section 54-56d of the Connecticut General Statutes, who wishes to be treated by prayer alone in accordance with the principles and practices of a church or religious denomination, may make application in writing to the facility.

(a) The application must state that the person's sincere religious beliefs require that he or she be treated by prayer alone and that a duly accredited practitioner or ordained minister, priest or rabbi of such church or religious denomination is available to provide such treatment.

(b) The application must be signed by both the person and the proposed clergy person who will provide such treatment and shall outline the nature and frequency of the treatment to be provided, the expected outcome, and the expected length of treatment.

(Adopted effective July 23, 1999)

Sec. 17a-543(i)-2. Review procedures

(a) Upon receipt of an application filed in accordance with section 17a-543(i)-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, the facility shall appoint a licensed physician of an appropriate specialty to conduct an evaluation of the person. Such physician shall prepare a written report, which shall contain his or her conclusion as to whether, based on the person's past history and/or current condition, there is a serious risk of harm to the person or to others if the person is permitted to be treated by prayer alone.

(b) The head of the facility shall then notify the person in writing of his or her decision to permit or not to permit treatment by prayer alone.

(Adopted effective July 23, 1999)

Sec. 17a-543(i)-3. Exclusions

No person authorized under section 17a-543(i)-1 through 17a-543(i)-2, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies to be treated by prayer alone shall be subject to any form of involuntary medical, psychological or psychiatric treatment unless:

(a) Emergency treatment is ordered under the provisions of section 17a-543(b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies;

(b) The head of the facility makes a finding in writing that the clergy person designated to provide such treatment has failed to provide the treatment described in the application submitted under subsection 17a-543(i)-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies; or

(c) The head of the facility has withdrawn such authorization, based on a physician's report that, since the time of the original authorization, the person's condition has changed and there now exists a serious risk of harm to the person or to others.

(Adopted effective July 23, 1999)