

# PATIENT ABUSE & POTENTIAL FRAUD IN THE UK FOR-PROFIT BEHAVIOURAL INDUSTRY— The Need for Effective & Accountable Oversight

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A public interest report by  
Citizens Commission on Human Rights International &  
United Kingdom  
A 50-year Mental Health Watchdog

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## INTRODUCTION: SYSTEMIC PATIENT ABUSE & FRAUD WARNING

For five decades, the Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR), an international non-profit mental health industry watchdog, with a national group founded in England in 1969, has investigated widespread patient abuse and fraudulent billing scams in the for-profit behavioural-mental health system.

To encapsulate what has been happening in both the UK and US, one law firm put it this way: “When patient care in hospitals takes a backseat to corporate profits, patients always lose. They not only lose in overall quality of care, but also when it comes to personal safety. In addition to just plain poor medical attention, some patients become the victims of various forms of criminal abuse, including sexual misconduct by doctors, assault, and rape by ... doctors, non-medical staff, and even other patients.”<sup>1</sup>

Since November 2015, CCHR has brought evidence of patient abuse to the attention of the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the National Health Service (NHS), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman in relation to two U.S. corporations: Universal Health Services (UHS) and Acadia Healthcare that have significant investments in the UK psychiatric hospital market. UHS owns Cygnet Healthcare, the Danshell Group and the Adult Services Division (only) of the Cambian Group. Acadia owns the Priory and Partnerships in Care (PiC).

**“When patient care in hospitals takes a backseat to corporate profits, patients always lose. They not only lose in overall quality of care, but also when it comes to personal safety. In addition to just plain poor medical attention, some patients become the victims of various forms of criminal abuse, including sexual misconduct by doctors, assault, and rape by ... doctors, non-medical staff, and even other patients.” – Law firm**

CCHR reported serious incidents of abuse and fraud associated with UHS and Acadia Healthcare facilities in the U.S. to the UK agencies as a warning; for example:

- In UHS behavioural hospitals, there were reports of patient suicides, restraint deaths, falsification of records, body-slammings patients into walls and sexual assault of patients that U.S. state authorities or the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) had investigated and acted upon.
- Many patients and families alleged incidents of misconduct against Acadia Healthcare facilities in the U.S., including wrongful death, sexual assault, and abuse/neglect of patients, some of whom were under 18.<sup>2</sup>

Despite these warnings, recent media has shown that these companies appear to have repeated the alleged U.S. modus operandi in the UK that CCHR alerted UK authorities to:

- Patients sustaining serious injury through self-harm; inadequate safety measures, thereby keeping suicidal patients in unsafe conditions<sup>3</sup>
- Patients having “access to screws in fixtures and fittings, which had led to repeated incidents of self-harm.”<sup>4</sup> For example, one patient was able to swallow objects such as screws and wire. <sup>5</sup>
- Allegations of inhuman and degrading treatment and cruelty to vulnerable people.<sup>6</sup>
- A staff member assaulting a patient<sup>7</sup> and
- Physical and psychological abuse of patients.<sup>8</sup>

### **A CULTURE OF PUTTING PROFITS BEFORE PATIENTS: U.S. BEHAVIOURAL CARE COMPANIES SET THEIR SIGHTS ON THE UK**

CCHR alerted the UK agencies five years ago that UHS executives had met with investors in December 2014. It pointed out the profitable venture in moving into the UK, where there had been a one per cent decrease in National Health Service (NHS) beds between December 2013 and March 14, 2014, with such closures “expected to continue.” As such, it could be predicted, UHS said, that this could lead to a “continuing trend towards more outsourcing to independent sector provision” (i.e., UHS), “partnerships with the NHS” and “contracting opportunities” for the company.<sup>9</sup>

In September 2016, CCHR also filed similar complaints to the same UK agencies about Acadia Healthcare’s acquisition of PiC and its earlier purchase of The Priory Group that added 300 new facilities and more than 7,200 beds to its network.<sup>10</sup> Acadia took advantage of what was reported to be Britain’s £16 billion mental healthcare market and the rise in NHS outsourcing. The £1.33 billion price tag for the Priory Group represented more than 10 times Acadia’s earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation.<sup>11</sup> The market for behavioural care in the UK had grown at 9.2 per cent annually from 2004 to 2014, largely due to a decline in NHS funding for government clinics, Acadia said. It reported that private operators controlled about 8 per cent of the £19.8 billion (US \$25 billion) market.<sup>12</sup>

**“What we hope does occur is that they [NHS] continue to close beds and have a need to outsource those patients to the private providers. We would be the big winner there.”**  
- Then CEO, Acadia Healthcare, owner of The Priory

In October 2018, *The Daily Mail* quoted Joey Jacobs, then CEO of Acadia, saying he hoped the NHS would axe more NHS-funded psychiatric facilities: “What we hope does occur is that they continue to close beds and have a need to outsource those patients to the private providers. We would be the big winner there.”<sup>13</sup>

UHS officials told investors that *reducing staffing costs and keeping occupancy rates high in its behavioural health division*, helped generate robust profits.<sup>14</sup> Internal financial reports showed that in 2014, one UHS facility in the U.S. projected a more than 50 per cent profit; however, while it increased its revenues, it continued to cut staff, according to a *BuzzFeed News* investigation.<sup>15</sup>

**UHS (owner of Cygnet) officials told investors that by reducing staffing costs and keeping occupancy rates high in its behavioural health division, this helped generate robust profits.**

Consider also that on April 10, 2017, the state of Massachusetts filed a lawsuit against UHS in U.S. federal court, accusing it of illegally charging government Medicaid insurance for outpatient mental health care by unqualified staff. *Modern Healthcare* reported: “UHS this year has faced scrutiny” over allegations that the “for-profit hospital operator kept psychiatric patients longer than necessary to milk their insurance.” Massachusetts asked for treble damages on the just over £74.5 million (\$94.2 million) in reimbursements it made to UHS between 2005 and 2013, as well as civil penalties, or a total of more than £223 million (\$282 million).<sup>16</sup>

This has been a contentious issue in the U.S. where UHS has been accused of putting “profits over patient needs,” the effects of which “can be disastrous,” according to the Lown Institute, a non-profit organisation that addresses healthcare issues.<sup>17</sup>

In July 2019, U.S. agreed to pay £105.3 million (\$127 million) to settle a U.S. Department of Justice investigation into its billing fraud (while admitting no wrongdoing).<sup>18</sup>

**In 2019, UHS agreed to pay £105.3 million to settle a U.S. Department of Justice billing fraud investigation, while Acadia Healthcare agreed to pay £13.4 million to settle U.S. Federal healthcare fraud claims.**

Add to that the potential waste of taxpayer/government funds. For example, in May 2019, Acadia Healthcare agreed to pay £13.4 million (\$17 million) to settle U.S. Federal healthcare fraud claims related to fraudulent billing for tests ordered in its drug treatment centres. The settlement represented the largest healthcare fraud settlement in the history of West Virginia. United States Attorney Mike Stuart stated, “This is a strong message and a massive penalty. The message is clear—if you are cheating the system and we find you, you’ll not only pay for the damage done but far more. This is a message of deterrence to other would-be fraudsters.”<sup>19</sup>

CCHR’s complaints had urged the UK agencies to ensure stringent oversight of these for-profit hospital chains, including for potential billing fraud. Given the massive financial investment of UK NHS/taxpayer pounds into this private sector, it would have behooved them to do so. This was further supported by UK media exposure of this:

- On 10 November 2018, UK media exposed both Acadia and UHS as being part of seven providers described as a “cluster of ‘fat cat’ private operators” that are “creaming off hundreds of millions of pounds from the NHS after muscling in on the cruel but lucrative trade in locking up people with autism and learning disabilities.” “Furious families” told *The Daily Mail* of staff helping to make decisions on sectioning [involuntarily detaining] people under mental health laws and private providers were “profiteering from misery,” milking the NHS of more than £14,000 (\$18,000) a week.<sup>20</sup>

**In 2015 and 2016, CCHR’s complaints to UK agencies urged them to ensure stringent oversight of U.S. owned for-profit hospital chains in the UK, including for potential billing fraud.**

- In December 2018, *The Daily Mail* further exposed how “U.S. healthcare firms, hedge funds and fat-cat charity chiefs have been accused by parents of viewing patients as ‘cash cows’ after muscling in on the lucrative sector. The NHS has paid these operators more than £100 million in the past year.”<sup>21</sup>

**In 2018, UK media exposed Acadia and UHS as part of seven providers described as a “cluster of ‘fat cat’ private operators that are “creaming off hundreds of millions of pounds from the NHS after muscling in on the cruel but lucrative trade in locking people up....”**  
- Daily Mail

- Seven providers were “charging taxpayers up to £730,000 (\$913,000) a year for each patient held in controversial and secretive secure psychiatric units.” £7.5 million (\$9.4 million) was reportedly taken home by the Chairman and CEO of Acadia, which in 2016 bought the Priory Group, with 10 UK hospitals “holding people with autism and learning disabilities,” according to *The Daily Mail*.<sup>22</sup> The Priory made £62.2 million (\$79.9 million) in 2017.<sup>23</sup>

#### **THE NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROTECTION**

CCHR is providing this report on behalf of consumers, including children—some forced into “mental health” treatment—and their families, because inadequate protections and oversight of the mental health-behavioural hospitals is putting

patients at serious risk. Greater accountability with commensurate penalties where violations occur is needed to curb further abuse.

This is reinforced by the evidence presented to the UK Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights hearing into the treatment of people with learning disabilities and autism in Assessment and Treatment Units (ATUs) and other inpatient units in 2018-2019.<sup>24</sup>

Compare the evidence heard in this hearing to those exposed in Winterbourne View in Hambrook, South Gloucestershire in 2012. The facility was owned by Castlebeck. In 2011, BBC's Panorama showed some staff at Winterbourne View Hospital slapping and hurting patients—patients were kicked, punched, mocked and mistreated.<sup>25</sup> The CQC was criticised for not acting when initially contacted by whistleblowers about the abuse.<sup>26</sup>

There were investigations and subsequently staff prosecutions and convictions in relation to the abuses. Eleven staff pleaded guilty to a total of 38 charges of ill treatment under the Mental Health Act. Sentences ranged from 6 months to two years. Six out of 11 care workers were jailed. Judge Neil Ford QC said there was a “culture of cruelty” at the care home. “What happened was a gross breach of trust,” he said.<sup>27</sup>

**CCHR is seeking support for regulations that will provide better oversight and accountability, with greater criminal and civil penalties for continued violations of standards of care, including patient safety infringements where patient suicides occurred while patients were not properly supervised. Every patient restraint death should be subject to police investigation and prosecution. Tougher penalties are needed for fraudulent billing practices, including hospital closures for repeated abuse and/or fraud.**

Yet, the cruelty continued and begs the question whether the staffs' prosecutions were not a sufficient deterrent. BBC's Panorama went undercover again between December 2018 and February 2019 to find similar abuses at Whorlton Hall in County Durham, owned by Cygnet (UHS). Joe Plomin, BBC Panorama producer/director wrote, “The government should have fixed these issues eight years ago.”<sup>28</sup>

The documentary uncovered staff abusing patients with learning disabilities with care at Whorlton Hall branded as ‘tantamount to psychological torture’ by the Labour Party. Staffs were filmed mocking, intimidating and repeatedly restraining patients. Once again, the CQC apologised after having rated the hospital ‘good’ following inspections of the facility in 2015 and 2016.<sup>29</sup>

Cygnet took over the running of Whorlton Hall at the end of 2018 and said it was “shocked and deeply saddened” about what Panorama found—but the point is

that it should not take undercover reporting and filming to enforce oversight of and protections in any facility.<sup>30</sup>

CCHR is seeking support for regulations that provide better oversight of this industry and accountability:

- (1) Greater criminal and civil penalties for continued violations of high standards of care, including patient safety infringements, including for patient suicides occurring while not properly supervised and damage inflicted from dangerously administered treatment, including for electroconvulsive therapy.
- (2) Police investigation and prosecution of every patient restraint death, as indicated;
- (3) Tougher penalties for fraudulent billing practices, including cancellation of NHS or other government funding with hospital closures for repeated abuse and/or fraud.

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## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### UNIVERSAL HEALTH SERVICES (CYGNET, CAMDEN, DANSHALL)

CCHR warned UK agencies against approval of new acquisitions by Acadia Healthcare and, in particular, UHS, due to ongoing U.S. Federal Department of Justice (DOJ) investigations into about 20 of UHS's behavioural facilities in nine states and its headquarters for potential billing fraud. UHS is discussed here first.

A *BuzzFeed News* investigation alleged that one UHS facility in the U.S. had billed health insurance for putting movies in a DVD player and taking patients on longer smoke breaks passed off as "group therapy."<sup>31</sup>

There was concern that similar activities might occur in the UK, especially as NHS accounted for 87 per cent of independent mental health hospitals' revenue, generating £1.14 billion in 2012 alone. Cygnet Healthcare was among the four largest providers at the time.<sup>32</sup>

In 2016, UK was already facing abuses in its psychiatric system.<sup>33</sup> This included more than 6,000 instances of physical restraint used on patients in England, who were increasingly being hurt as a result of the restraints, and rape or sexual assault of patients in hospitals, significantly 'mental health units,' was also rife.<sup>34</sup>

As reported to U.S. agencies, the rate of physical restraints use in UHS facilities has been high. For example, in an Illinois UHS facility, restraint use was nearly eight times the median for all state facilities.<sup>35</sup>

On 29 January 2016, David Behan, Chief Executive of CQC wrote to CCHR saying the allegations were "serious" and "We are very concerned to read about the issues that have been identified in UHS in America and we note your concerns about these in relation to the services provided by Cygnet Healthcare since they were acquired by UHS."<sup>36</sup>

He said Cygnet, owned by UHS, had 19 psychiatric facilities and two care homes. He assured CCHR that inspections had been carried out on nine of the

**With 6,000 incidents of physical restraints used in England's mental health system in 2016, CCHR warned UK authorities of the high rate of restraints use in U.S. for-profit psychiatric hospitals. In one UHS behavioral facility in Illinois, restraint use was nearly eight times the median for all state facilities.**

**"We are very concerned to read about the issues that have been identified in UHS in America and we note your concerns about these in relation to the services provided by Cygnet Healthcare since they were acquired by UHS."**

**- CQC response to CCHR complaint, January 2016**

Cygnets facilities in 2015, and two of the care homes were found to be “good” overall. “We have taken appropriate action against services managed by Cygnets Healthcare whenever we have found them to have breached regulations,” the letter stated. Mr. Behan said he had forwarded a copy of CCHR’s letter to NHS England and assured CCHR that CQC “takes all information received about services seriously....”

On 5 December 2016, the announcement of UHS’s acquisition of the Adult Services division of Cambian was made and by December 28 it was finalised. This was despite the ongoing exposure of concerns about UHS in the U.S. For example:

- A 7 December 2016 *BuzzFeed News* exposé had reported that “Current and former employees from at least 10 UHS hospitals in nine [U.S.] states said they were under pressure to fill beds by almost any method – which sometimes meant exaggerating people’s symptoms or twisting their words to make them seem suicidal – and to hold them until their insurance payments ran out.”<sup>37</sup>
- Two dozen current and former employees from 14 UHS facilities told *BuzzFeed News* that the rule was to keep patients until their insurance ran out in order to get the maximum payment.<sup>38</sup>

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**– *BuzzFeed News*,  
December 2016**

In May 2017, CCHR filed another complaint to the CQC and other agencies following UHS’s acquisition of the Adult Services Division of the Cambian Group.<sup>39</sup> At that time, the number of UHS facilities under U.S. Department of Justice investigation had increased from 21 to 26.

The new complaint detailed even more examples of concerns from U.S. federal and state legislators regarding the “troubling allegations of misconduct, negligence and employee intimidation” at UHS facilities. Further, “Additional reports detail claims of violence, sexual assaults, patient runaways and lack of security staff at UHS facilities in Illinois and Ohio, as well as company efforts to threaten employees who speak up about these conditions.”<sup>40</sup>

*The Washington Post* reported that a 15 year old had died in November 2017 after he was restrained at UHS’s North Spring Behavioural Healthcare in Leesburg, Virginia. The prosecutor filed involuntary manslaughter charges against a mental health technician, for which he was convicted.<sup>41</sup>

This should have put UHS's UK facilities under greater scrutiny over potential poor and hazardous practices, yet there appeared to be no effective action even on inspections, as reported in a 2017 *BuzzFeed News* article that said Cygnet Health Care had been "accused of failing to properly care for vulnerable young patients by their families." A series of official inspection reports had rated the safety of patients at one of the hospitals as 'requires improvement,' and another as 'inadequate.'<sup>42</sup>

*BuzzFeed's* investigation findings included:

- Several families alleged their relatives sustained serious injury through self-harm while under Cygnet care.
- On one occasion, a 16-year-old patient placed as many as five metal items in his arm but was not taken to the local hospital for emergency care, his family claimed.
- A doctor with knowledge of Cygnet hospitals described an environment that was unsafe.
- Two young patients at one hospital told the CQC inspectors that some staffs were "unsympathetic and vindictive towards them." Its report rated the hospital "inadequate in terms of safety and effectiveness."<sup>43</sup>

**U.S. LEGISLATORS REPEATEDLY CALLED FOR ACTION ON UHS FACILITIES:**

The CCHR complaints to UK authorities had also put them on notice of U.S. legislators actions taken over abuses reported in UHS behavioral facilities, which have continued. For example:

- June 2015: U.S. Congressmen Joe Kennedy III from Massachusetts and Danny Davis from Illinois jointly wrote to the Acting Administrator for the U.S. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services requesting the agency speed up investigation into UHS.<sup>44</sup> Congressman Kennedy's press release stated there had been "troubling allegations of misconduct, negligence and employee intimidation" at UHS facilities.<sup>45</sup>
- April 2017: Senator Grassley, head of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, raised serious allegations against UHS's Shadow Mountain behavioural hospital in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Police records, state inspection reports, lawsuits, and more than 15 current and former employees, revealed that Shadow Mountain was "a profoundly troubled facility where frequent violence endangers patients and staff alike, where children as young as five are

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– *BuzzFeed News*,  
December 2017

*separated from their parents and held in dangerous situations, and where wards lack adequate staffing....”<sup>46</sup>*

- April 2017: Oklahoma’s Governor Mary Fallin and Senator Jim Inhofe asked the Oklahoma Department of Human Services to investigate Shadow Mountain Behavioural Health over the allegations of systemic abuses of patients.<sup>47</sup>
- November 2017: Alabama State Representative Terri Sewell said that allegations of patient assault and abuse at UHS’s Hill Crest Behavioural Health Services in Birmingham, Alabama, were “disturbing and appalling.” He stated: “These allegations should be thoroughly investigated by law enforcement and the appropriate licensing boards so that *those responsible are held accountable* and patients will be cared for in environments that are safe.”<sup>48</sup> [Emphasis added]
- **December 2017:** Senator Grassley called for a Federal probe into UHS’s psychiatric hospital sector stating, “The continued reporting on UHS facilities shows a *disturbing trend of behaviour,*” and “The most recent allegations cause significant *concern about whether UHS has the ability to adequately manage the facilities under its control.*”<sup>49</sup> [Emphasis added]

***“These allegations should be thoroughly investigated by law enforcement and the appropriate licensing boards so that those responsible are held accountable and patients will be cared for in environments that are safe.”***

- Alabama State Representative Terri Sewell speaking about UHS Hill Crest facility, November 2017

#### **ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF UHS BEHAVIOURAL PATIENTS RIFE:**

Factor in also that the following abuses in the U.S. were publicised and, therefore, easily found. Any UK agency allowing U.S. behavioural health industry ownership of UK mental health hospitals could—should—have appraised itself of this information. As an example:

- 2014: the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services had cited UHS’s Brentwood psychiatric facility after uncovering six instances of sexual misconduct that had occurred over a period of nine weeks. One of the incidents involved a boy just eight years old.<sup>50</sup>
- 2014: UHS’s National Deaf Academy (NDA), a behavioural health facility in Florida that treated autistic patients came under scrutiny after police reports showed that of ten alleged abuse incidents reported to the police department, three were for sexual abuse. Allegations also included a patient allegedly being

punched by a staff member and another child having hair pulled out by a staff member. Other patients were neglected.<sup>51</sup> CCHR also documented whistleblower complaints from former NDA staff that were forwarded to the FBI. In January 2016, NDA closed following years of complaints and media exposure of alleged abuse.

- September 2015: A lawsuit was filed against UHS's Rock River facility in Illinois on behalf of five adolescent females, who alleged sexual abuse and rape by staff.<sup>52</sup> A *Chicago Tribune* investigation found there were dozens of claims of sexual abuse at Rock River: "The staff was having sex with whomever they could have sex with...whoever was vulnerable," Fayshawn Petty, a former Rock River Academy resident was quoted as saying.<sup>53</sup> Rock River closed down after it was put on a government hold.
- August 2017: The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health closed UHS's Westwood Lodge psychiatric hospital due to "issues concerning patient safety and quality of care," amid a sexual assault investigation.<sup>54</sup> Westwood's psychiatric unit for children had earlier been ordered shut down following a surprise inspection.<sup>55</sup>
- September 2017: UHS's Anchor Hospital in College Park near Atlanta, Georgia was accused of negligence after a 16-year-old sexual assault victim said she was raped. Her mother's attorney, Chris Stewart said: "Once we started digging into it, we just saw how bad their history is over there." The lawsuit said the hospital had a history of failing to have adequate staff and has been cited by the federal U.S. government for violations. People who are abused "shouldn't be tortured at a place that they go to get help," Stewart stated.<sup>56</sup>
- February 2018: UHS's Timberlawn Behavioural Hospital in Texas closed after state officials threatened to shut it down because it was too dangerous for patients.<sup>57</sup> This included the rape of a 13-year-old girl at the facility.<sup>58</sup> Timberlawn's chief executive inexcusably told *The Dallas Morning News*, "We believe our rate of serious incidents [of sexual abuse] associated with the

***"The staff was having sex with whomever they could have sex with...whoever was vulnerable."***

- **Fayshawn Petty, a former UHS Rock River Academy resident**

(In 2015 Rock River closed after a government hold on admissions to it.)

***"This [rape] can't happen to anyone else. The place needs to be shut down."***

**-Father of 13 year-old-girl raped while a resident at UHS' Timberlawn Hospital. UHS voluntarily closed the facility in 2018 after Texas state officials threatened to shut it down as too dangerous.**

patient population treated at Timberlawn is *within industry norm*.”<sup>59</sup> But as the girl’s father stated: “This can’t happen to anyone else. The place needs to be shut down.”<sup>60</sup> As should any facility where sexual and other abuse is found.

- A review of lawsuits and allegations against about 20 UHS facilities in the U.S. between April 2017 and October 2018 revealed: The rape of two teenage girls; a 12-year-old boy was sexually assaulted; a sexual abuse patient was roomed with a known sex offender; there was an assault and battery of an 11-year-old girl and the restraint death of a 15-year-old boy. Child abuse, including abuse of foster care children was alleged, while internal surveillance videos showed foster children being tackled, dragged, and choked by staff members;
- At least three UHS facility staffs were convicted of sexual abuse of patients, including a child, with two staff serving a combined 35 years in jail. In fact, the Milton Girls Juvenile Residential Facility in Florida was shut down by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, citing significant health, safety and security concerns. The facility’s supervisor and “mental health technician,” Shannon Abbott, was charged with and convicted of felony child abuse.<sup>61</sup>

***“The most recent allegations cause significant concern about whether UHS has the ability to adequately manage the facilities under its control.”***

- U.S. Senator Charles Grassley, December 2017

***I am “deeply worried about the ability of Cygnet to provide adequate and safe health care to patients who are clearly some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society.”***

- Louise Haigh, MP  
October 2017

And even more abuses have been uncovered which should have raised an alarm:

- Allegations that involuntary commitment laws, such as the Baker Act in Florida, were used to detain patients longer in order to milk their insurance.<sup>62</sup>
- In 2018, WFAA News in Texas did a series, “Against Their Will,” which alleged that a mother took her 11-year-old son to UHS’s Millwood hospital seeking help but the hospital then detained him without her consent. As detailed: “[T]he door locks behind you. You’re told you can’t leave. Stripped of your clothes, given a new bed. You have no idea when you’ll see your family again.” The facility billed his mother’s insurance company more than £8,790 (\$11,000) for the unwanted stay.<sup>63</sup>

A lawsuit filed against UHS in 2018 alleged:

- *“The enterprise works to admit people to facilities, whether they need to be admitted or not. Then, once admitted, the enterprise goes to extraordinary lengths to ensure that a patient is kept as long as a payer will pay or, upon suspicion and belief, until such time as a replacement patient or set of patients can be obtained. In furtherance of this scheme, admission documents are forged; documents to secure that a patient will remain in a facility are falsely notarised and then filed into the state court system; and, in some cases, a person’s medical record is written to reflect that services were provided or that certain events occurred, when, in fact, they did not occur.”* Further: *“UHS and its affiliates will enter in clandestine joint ventures with physicians, predicated upon increasing referrals, increasing admissions and increasing lengths of stay.”*<sup>64</sup>

**Allegations include:**  
**“[A]dmission documents are forged; documents to secure that a patient will remain in a facility are falsely notarised and then filed into the state court system; and, in some cases, a person’s medical record is written to reflect that services were provided or that certain events occurred, when, in fact, they did not occur.”**

**- U.S. Lawsuit filed against UHS  
2018**

- On 12 April 2019 *Becker’s Hospital Review* in the U.S. reported that UHS “can’t dodge claims it held patients illegally, investors say.” Shareholders have been in a legal fight with UHS since 2017 (amended in November 2018) and argued that UHS can’t dismiss claims it fueled revenues by, for example, involuntarily committing patients to its psychiatric hospitals.<sup>65</sup>

To date, UHS has set aside \$123 million for the U.S. DOJ investigations into its billing practices involving now 30 behavioural facilities and its headquarters.<sup>66</sup>

All of which supports concerns expressed by Louise Haigh MP, a representative for Sheffield Heeley and a shadow minister in 2017. She stated: “The NHS should not be placing patients in Cygnet hospitals if CQC inspectors were to judge that they have ‘inadequate’ safety.” After Haigh met with NHS and CQC officials in October 2017, she wrote to both bodies to say she was “deeply worried about the ability of Cygnet to provide adequate and safe health care to patients who are clearly some of the most vulnerable individuals in our society.”<sup>67</sup>

**“The NHS should not be placing patients in Cygnet hospitals if CQC inspectors were to judge that they have ‘inadequate’ safety.”**

**- Louise Haigh MP, 2017**

- Two years later in February 2019, a CQC inspection of Thors Park, a facility for men with learning disabilities owned by Cygnet Health Care (UHS), resulted in the centre being rated “inadequate” and a subsequent report in April disclosed there had been a number of allegations of abuse.<sup>68</sup>
- May 2019: A police investigation was started into assault allegations at Thors Park. Christian Girboan, a 34-year-old member of staff at Thors Park, was due to appear in Colchester Magistrates’ Court to answer a charge of assault by beating which had occurred on 22 September 2018. Cygnet said it had dismissed the staff member.<sup>69</sup>
- June 2019: The *Health Service Journal* reported that a multi-agency investigation was launched into UHS’s Cygnet Hospital Maidstone in Weaving, which had opened in October 2018, over its already disproportionate number of safeguard alerts for patient-on-patient assaults in April.<sup>70</sup>

**In June 2019, the *Health Service Journal* reported that a multi-agency investigation was launched into UHS’s Cygnet Hospital Maidstone in Weaving, which had opened in October 2018, over its already disproportionate number of safeguard alerts for patient-on-patient assaults in April.**

These are not “isolated” incidents but indicate systemic abuse and one that should not be allowed to spread into the UK by UHS-owned or any other for-profit mental health care facility.

### **ACADIA HEALTHCARE (THE PRIORY)**

CCHR also warned UK agencies against approval of new acquisitions by Acadia Healthcare. There has been abuse in both UK and U.S. Acadia facilities.

In 2016, *The Financial Times* reported, “U.S. companies Acadia Healthcare and Universal Health Services entered the UK market for the first time last year, helping to fuel a deal-making spree in the sector. The number of takeovers of mental healthcare providers rose from 16 in 2014 to 22 in 2015.” Acadia accounted for about a third of the UK’s private behavioural services.<sup>71</sup>

For the year ending 31 December 2015, Acadia received 20 per cent of its revenue from the NHS.<sup>72</sup> In a September 2016 presentation to investors, Acadia displayed a pro-forma pie chart showing that revenue from UK facilities for the 12 months ending 31 March 2016 was 44 per cent of total revenue.<sup>73</sup>

As CCHR's 2016 and 2017 complaints to UK authorities had detailed, "While Acadia grew its revenue by acquisition, it grew its profit by significant *cost cuts* that could be linked to reduced quality of patient care and safety. Staffing problems and patient-safety issues often crop up in for-profit mental-health facilities."<sup>74</sup>

In response to the Acadia complaint, Philip McCormick from the Competition and Markets Authority responded on 1 June 2017 that "We always welcome information, but unfortunately we are not able to respond in detail to individual complaints or concerns." But serious allegations had been raised about Acadia.

Until a recent management shakeup, since 2012, all but one of the corporate officers of Acadia in the U.S. had been previous owners and/or officers of another psychiatric hospital chain, Psychiatric Solutions Inc. (PSI), a company which UHS bought out in 2010 for £2.4 billion (\$3.1 billion).<sup>75</sup> *The Dallas Morning News* featured a story about state actions in response to allegations against PSI's Texas Hospitals, such as:

- Staff members **falsified records** to show that a patient who committed **suicide** had been monitored properly: fined £124,000 (\$155,000).
- A hospital failed to implement safeguards to keep at-risk geriatric patients from falling multiple times: fined £7,985 (\$10,000)
- A male patient, using a razor blade given to him by staff, slit his wrist in the shower. Investigators found that 15 patients went unchecked by staff for a nine-hour period.<sup>76</sup>

UHS purchased PSI in 2010 accepting its then legal liabilities, which included a lawsuit against PSI facilities alleging incidents of restraint-caused brain damage, dangerous prescription practices, sexual abuse of patients and medical neglect along with fines for endangering patients.<sup>77</sup>

A lawsuit filed on 21 September 2009 on behalf of purchasers of PSI stock, alleged that PSI had deceived investors about the quality of care it delivered to patients, and manipulations of its malpractice reserves. PSI failed to sufficiently staff its facilities, resulting in alarming incidents of abuse, neglect, and even death of its patients, and downplayed the significance of these events when they became public. The case settled for nearly £52 million (\$65 million) in 2015.<sup>78</sup>

**"We always welcome information, but unfortunately we are not able to respond in detail to individual complaints or concerns."**

**Competition Markets Authority  
response to CCHR's concerns  
about Acadia acquisitions in the  
UK, June 2017**

## Allegations of abuse have plagued Acadia in the U.S.

- Acadia bought Rolling Hills Hospital in Oklahoma in 2012. As reported in 2019, since the purchase, three families had sued over injuries to loved ones who were patients there. Government inspection documents reported allegations of sexual harassment and physical abuse. The hospital didn't investigate to determine if the reports were legitimate, according to inspection reports.<sup>79</sup>
  - Circa 2017: A Disability Rights group investigated Acadia's Ohio Hospital for Psychiatry (OHP), a 130-bed, inpatient psychiatric hospital located in Franklin County. The group found substantiated allegations of sexual and physical abuse and the use of seclusion in an unsafe manner, among other abuses.<sup>80</sup>
  - 2017: A *Capital Forum* magazine investigation into Acadia Healthcare uncovered "a pattern of patient care and safety violations at its behavioural health facilities that could put the company at risk of federal investigation or losing Medicare or Medicaid insurance funding. The company's strategy of rolling up [becoming larger by successive accumulations] new facilities then slashing costs may make it difficult at many of its locations to ensure that patients are managed safely and given adequate care." Its review of state inspection records for Acadia facilities revealed a history of violations in safety procedures, medical care, and patient rights. *Capitol Forum* had obtained inspection records for nine of the 12 facilities which were cited for violations leading to lapses in safety or direct patient harm.<sup>81</sup>
- A 2017 *Capital Forum* magazine investigation into Acadia Healthcare in the U.S. uncovered an alleged "pattern of patient care and safety violations at its behavioural health facilities that could put the company at risk of federal investigation... The company's strategy of rolling up new facilities then slashing costs may make it difficult at many of its locations to ensure that patients are managed safely and given adequate care."**
- According to *Capital Forum*, "Acadia and/or its facilities have been the target of lawsuits over injuries and deaths occurring at the facilities."
  - October 2018: Acadia announced the closure of 10 of its childcare facilities in Arkansas, claiming budgetary reasons, yet the announcement came after manslaughter charges had been filed against several of its staff for leaving a five-year-old boy strapped in a car that reached temperatures of 141 degrees that killed him.<sup>82</sup>

- February 2019: *The Capitol Forum* reported it had obtained 373 pages of Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) documents regarding investigations into Acadia's Oasis Behavioural Health near Phoenix, Arizona. These detailed how between January 2014 and September 2018, the facility had been investigated dozens of times after reports of poor care and dangerous conditions. Complaints included physical and sexual assaults, forging of documents, short-staffing, runaway patients, and failures to prevent injuries and suicide attempts. "Things were dangerous," one former employee said. "There were broken vents that kids could cut themselves with. Nothing was locked up that could be broken and used for self-harm. Staff were hurting children. A child was escorted to the hospital because he was punched in the face by a staff member. I directly observed a staff member screaming at a kid with severe trauma."<sup>83</sup>

**Acadia: USA  
Allegations 2019**

**Desert Hills behavioral facility closed following allegations of abuse and safety issues, including chemical restraints use on children.**

**Six lawsuits filed claiming abuse and safety issues at Timberline Knolls in Lemont, Illinois, following a staff counselor being charged with sexual assault and abuse.**

**A shareholder lawsuit was filed in federal court which alleged \$1 billion of insider trading proceeds to top officials.**

- April 2019: Acadia was reported to be closing its Desert Hills facility in New Mexico, following allegations of abuse and safety issues. A spokesman admitted that workers at Desert Hills used chemical restraints on children regardless of The New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department's request for them to stop.<sup>84</sup>
- April 2019: The *Chicago Tribune* reported that six lawsuits had been filed claiming abuse and safety issues at Acadia Healthcare facility Timberline Knolls in Lemont, Illinois. The lawsuits were in connection to counselor Michael Jacksa who has been charged with sexual assault and abuse. The six separate lawsuits alleged that the high-end facility for women and girls showed reckless disregard for patient safety by hiring and failing to supervise therapist Michael Jacksa as well as "intentional infliction of emotional distress" on patients who sought treatment for psychological and behavioural disorders.<sup>85</sup>
- May 2019: *Nashville Public Radio* reported that in the U.S., Acadia was facing a shareholder lawsuit in federal court which alleged \$1 billion of insider trading proceeds to top officials. The shareholders cited a litany of news articles from around the country highlighting understaffing and regulatory

violations at some of its nearly 600 facilities as top executives gave investors a rosier outlook, artificially inflating share prices.<sup>86</sup>

CCHR's letter sent to UK authorities about Acadia quoted a UK clinical negligence lawyer who had written in June 2016: "As we see increasing numbers of NHS contracts won by private organisations, we need to acknowledge that their primary duty is to their shareholders with profits in mind. This could potentially impact upon standards of care....The treatment received by patients in private hospitals is a much neglected area of patient safety that will only get worse as increasing numbers of private hospitals are contracted to carry out NHS functions."<sup>87</sup>

The letter specified concerns for minors because Acadia's interests in the U.S. had been largely children. According to an Acadia Securities and Exchange Commission filing in the United States, "Management believes that children and adolescents are a patient class that is less susceptible to reductions in reimbursement rates."<sup>88</sup> To pursue referrals, Acadia deployed a network of "relationship managers" who met with doctors regularly to "make the medical community aware of their capabilities."<sup>89</sup>

It is not known what percentage of The Priory patients are children and adolescents.

Given the examples of abuses uncovered in U.S. Acadia facilities, it is not surprising that a similar culture of patient abuse might be occurring in the UK.

Since Acadia's takeover of The Priory in the UK, patient deaths have been reported.<sup>90</sup>

- Anne Morris was treated at Priory Hospital Ticehurst House and died in 2017 after being discharged to a friend's house without relatives being told. The Priory failed to identify anyone responsible for her ongoing care, according to the *Mirror*.<sup>91</sup>
- Will Jordan was only 16, when he was found hanging in his room at The Priory Hospital, London, after being left unattended. A coroner said logs "were entered to create impression" of observation carried out.<sup>92</sup>

**"As we see increasing numbers of NHS contracts won by private organisations, we need to acknowledge that their primary duty is to their shareholders with profits in mind. This could potentially impact upon standards of care....The treatment received by patients in private hospitals is a much neglected area of patient safety that will only get worse as increasing numbers of private hospitals are contracted to carry out NHS functions."**

- CCHR letter to UK authorities regarding Acadia, June 2016

- On 12 July 2018 Hannah Bharaj from Bolton walked off a balcony—an act of suicide—suffering catastrophic brain injuries that proved fatal. She had been admitted to Oaktrees Ward, an eating disorder unit at Clatterbridge Hospital in the Wirral, where she had remained for nearly six months.<sup>93</sup> She was discharged in May 2018, sent home with a **month’s supply of antidepressants**. Within days, Hannah had taken an overdose and was admitted to an acute psychiatric ward at the Royal Bolton Hospital, then transferred to the Priory at Cheadle. She was placed on an acute psychiatric ward which was described as “scary” and “frightening” for a young woman, surrounded by older patients. Over the course of her stay at the Priory, Hannah made very little progress and in July 2019, Coroner Alison Mutch recorded how her sense of “hopelessness” had increased. She was allowed to leave the Priory once a day to spend time with her parents. It was during one of these visits that she lost her life.<sup>94</sup> Dr. Ty Glover, a consultant psychiatrist at the Priory, told the inquest that in allowing Hannah to leave he “didn’t see the danger” despite being classed at “high risk” of suicide.<sup>95</sup>

Then there are the December 2018 and February 2019 House of Commons hearings on the deplorable treatment and involuntary commitment of children in psychiatric facilities, some operated by Acadia Healthcare. Families gave shocking testimony about children being locked away, isolated and fed through holes—stirring calls for immediate reform.<sup>96</sup> Allegations included:

- Parents revealed horrifying stories of how their autistic sons and daughters have been ‘locked up, force-fed drugs and abused.’<sup>97</sup>
- Tom and Paula McGowan told the *Daily Mirror* they had been battling for justice over the death of their son, Oliver. He died after being given the antipsychotic olanzapine (Zyprexa) against his wishes, because he’d suffered adverse effects previously from the drug.<sup>98</sup>

**Evidence presented to House of Commons Hearings (2018-2019)**

**Parents revealed horrifying stories of how their autistic sons and daughters have been ‘locked up, force-fed drugs and abused.’**

**Parents battling for justice over the death of their son who died after being given the antipsychotic olanzapine (Zyprexa) against his will, because he’d suffered adverse effects previously from the drug.**

**Children locked away, isolated and fed through holes.**

- On 13 February 2019, the CQC issued a report stating that the Priory Hospital High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire that treats 13-17 year olds had been placed under “special measures” after being rated as “inadequate.”<sup>99</sup>
- The CQC report further stated there had been four incidents where nurses had administered the wrong dose of medication.<sup>100</sup> And a staff member allegedly assaulted a patient.<sup>101</sup> Karen Bennett-Wilson, Head of Hospital Inspection, said: “Following the Inspection, the Priory Group has decided to transfer the young people who were being treated there and have applied to de-register the hospital. In line with our policy the unit will remain in special measures until such time that the registration is cancelled.”<sup>102</sup>
- February 2019: The Priory announced it would close High Wycombe Hospital.<sup>103</sup>
- May 2019: A *Sunday Mirror* investigation found suicidal patients were left unattended in Priory hospitals, with materials that could be used to take their own lives. Falsified records were identified as matters of concern in two deaths.<sup>104</sup>
- June 2018: Acadia’s UK interests came under scrutiny when psychiatrists were alleged to be taking kickbacks as a reward for referring rich patients to one of its drug rehab facilities, Life Works, part of The Priory Group acquired by Acadia. Dr. Bhaskar Punukollu, a psychiatrist who specialises in drug and alcohol addiction at the private Nightingale Hospital in central London owned by The Priory, told *The Sunday Times* he had been paid referral fees on many occasions to pass on his patients to Life Works. “Believe me, I loved it. I used to send quite a few people to Life Works and they’d pay me £80 or £90 a day, which worked very well because we didn’t have to see the patients.” The Priory Group, as owner of Life Works, denied paying referral fees. Such payments, which are prohibited under General Medical Council (GMC) rules, were blamed for increasing the cost of private care in the UK. (The Priory Group denied it paid referral fees.)<sup>105</sup>
- Acadia has announced it is considering selling The Priory.<sup>106</sup>

## HARMFUL ELECTROSHOCK & PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG COSTS

Any stringent monitoring of the for-profit mental health sector—and, indeed, even state-run psychiatric facilities—must include the amount of electroshock treatment (ECT) and psychotropic drugs administered. ECT, especially, is a potentially lucrative area. The adverse effects of ECT can prolong the length of a hospital stay; thus, its delivery can increase profits.<sup>107</sup>

ECT delivers up to 460 volts of electricity through the brain causing a grand mal seizure, with adverse effects that include: cardiovascular complications, stroke, cognitive and memory impairment, prolonged seizures; worsening of psychiatric symptoms and death.<sup>108</sup> In October, 2018, Somatics LLC, the U.S. manufacturer of the ECT device, the Thymatron—a device also used in the UK—warned of “permanent brain damage” as a potential risk.<sup>109</sup>

- It is estimated from Freedom of Information (FOI) requests that from 2016 to 2018, 5,165 patients, aged 18 – 98, were given electroshock in the UK.<sup>110</sup> More than 22,600 individual ECT treatments were carried out in 2015-16, a rise of 11 per cent from four years earlier, when about 20,400 were carried out. The data collected through FOI by *The Guardian* covered 44 NHS trusts that provided comparable data. Figures for private clinics were not included.<sup>111</sup>
- Five out of 29 NHS Trusts who responded to a survey on ECT admitted administering it to under-18s.<sup>112</sup>
- At least 11 of 26 Priory facilities listed on their websites treatment for “treatment resistant depression” (TRD). ECT is named as one of the treatments for TRD.<sup>113</sup>
- In 2017, a *British Medical Journal* article said, “Coercion in its various guises has always been central to psychiatry, a legacy of its institutional origins.” In England, the rate of involuntary psychiatric hospital admission had increased

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by more than a third in the previous six years. And more than half of admissions to psychiatric hospitals in England are now involuntary.<sup>114</sup> This is a breeding ground for administering drugs and ECT without a patient's consent and in potential violation of international treaties and conventions.

- The administration of involuntary treatment—endorsed through the Mental Health Act—violates United Nations conventions against torture. A July 2018 UN Human Rights Council report on “Mental health and human rights,” called on governments to recognise that forced psychiatric treatment, including ECT, are “practices constituting torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment....”<sup>115</sup> On 16 February 2013, a report from the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment defined procedures such as electroshock without the consent of the patient as a form of torture.<sup>116</sup>

**.A July 2018 UN Human Rights Council report on “Mental health and human rights,” called on governments to recognise that forced psychiatric treatment, including ECT, are “practices constituting torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment....”**

- Indeed, Australian psychiatrist, Niall McLaren wrote that any psychiatrist who says, ‘You need ECT’ is really only saying, ‘I don’t know what else to do.’ I will repeat: No psychiatrist needs to use ECT.”<sup>117</sup>
- In fact, the use of electroshock in any mental health facility should be banned.

As for psychotropic drugs, in the U.S., numerous psychiatrists affiliated with UHS and other for-profit behavioural health care facilities have been disclosed as top national and state prescribers of psychotropic drugs.<sup>118</sup>

- In 2015, the *Chicago Tribune* found that staff in UHS’s now closed Rock River hospital had also administered psychotropic drugs such as the powerful antipsychotic, chlorpromazine, at dosages which were far higher than doses at similar youth facilities. Residents said they were knocked out for hours from the drugs.<sup>119</sup>
- The John Costigan Center in Illinois (part of UHS’s Streamwood Behavioural Healthcare System) was closed after being ranked for many years as being among the top two Illinois facilities in the rate of dispensing emergency tranquillisers.<sup>120</sup>

A critical review of the prescription of psychotropic drugs in for-profit psychiatric facilities compare to state-run institutions is recommended. Costs to the country generally are already high (albeit profitable for the manufacturers.)

- Estimated total NHS spending on medicines in England has grown from £13 billion in 2010/11 to £17.4 billion in 2016/17.<sup>121</sup>
- Between 2006 and 2016, the number for the central nervous system drugs increased by 60.1 per cent to about 207 million.
- Antidepressants, analgesics and anti-epileptic drugs were the reason for about 88 per cent of the volume increase in the central nervous system clinical area, with antidepressants seeing the largest numerical growth—the number of prescriptions issued in 2016 was up 33.7 million (108.5 per cent) on 2006.<sup>122</sup>
- In 2016, it was reported that the NHS spent £780,000 a day on antidepressants, according to the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC)—more than £284 million a year. <sup>123</sup>
- A 2011 analysis reported the cost of brand name antipsychotics in the UK was around £264 million and \$231 million for generic antipsychotics.<sup>124</sup>

**“These private hospitals are institutions that have no place in society. It is clear that their only purpose is to make money off the back of abusing vulnerable people.”**

**- Steve Sollers, father of Sam, allegedly abused at Winterbourne View, May 2019**

When you add the costs for treatments that may very well be failing patients because of iatrogenic adverse effects to the abuses that are rife within the mental health-behavioural industry with insufficient accountability, it is a recipe for disaster—at high cost to the state and risk to patients’ health and safety,

West Palm Beach County, Florida State Attorney Dave Aronberg’s views reflect CCHR’s concerns about both the U.S. and the UK for-profit mental health field: “This is an entire industry that’s been corrupted by easy money. Unscrupulous actors have taken advantage of well-intended federal law and a lack of any good law at the state level, to profit off people at the lowest stages of their lives.”<sup>125</sup>

Sam Sollers was admitted to Winterbourne View and abused. His father, Steve, sums up what still remains of the situation today: “These private hospitals are institutions that have no place in society. It is clear that their only purpose is to make money off the back of abusing vulnerable people.”<sup>126</sup>

## SUMMARY: ACCOUNTABILITY NEEDED

How many more patients are to be restrained, abused and tortured or children and adults sexually assaulted in for-profit “mental health” facilities? How many more patients are to be damaged by electroshock or dangerously high doses of psychotropic drugs before effective action is taken and workable care implemented?

More stringent *accountable* oversight systems with greater penalties as a deterrent are necessary. Legislation should make facilities and treating doctors culpable for patient damage, accountable both criminally and civilly. Increased safeguards should be put in place with a penalty for violation including jail, hefty fines and the loss of NHS contracts and funding.

Strong measures, such as those recommended at the beginning of this report must be taken to thwart the level of abuse, fraud and malpractice that is so widespread, In doing so, we can ensure protection and better and accountable health care.

**More stringent *accountable* oversight systems with greater penalties as a deterrent are necessary. Legislation should make facilities and treating doctors culpable for patient damage, accountable both criminally and civilly. Increased safeguards should be put in place with a penalty for violation including jail, hefty fines and the loss of NHS contracts and funding.**

## **ABOUT CITIZENS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS:**

The Citizens Commission on Human Rights (CCHR) was established in 1969 by the Church of Scientology and Dr. Thomas Szasz, professor of psychiatry at the State University of New York Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, New York, to investigate and expose psychiatric abuses committed under the guise of mental health care. Today, it has hundreds of chapters in over 30 countries. Its board of advisors, called Commissioners, includes doctors, lawyers, educators, business professionals, and civil and human rights representatives. CCHR has inspired and helped orchestrate many hundreds of reforms by testifying before legislative hearings and conducting public hearings into psychiatric abuse, as well as working with media, law enforcement and public officials the world over.

**MISSION STATEMENT:** CCHR investigates and exposes psychiatric violations of human rights. It works shoulder-to-shoulder with like-minded groups and individuals who share a common purpose to clean up the field of mental health and secure human rights within it. We shall continue to do so until psychiatry's abusive and coercive practices cease and human rights and dignity are returned to all.

**Chris Brightmore**  
**Former Detective Chief Superintendent,**  
**Metropolitan Police, UK**

*"I am acutely aware of the evil that malicious, or even misguided, psychiatrists are capable of if their activities are not carefully monitored. This is the crucial role that CCHR so heroically performs. I had the great pleasure and privilege of opening the Fraud Section of CCHR's exhibit in Los Angeles. After touring the exhibition, which I must say is one of the most impressive I have ever seen, and looking over the accomplishments of CCHR, I can see why some psychiatrists regard the organization's growing strength with considerable apprehension."*

**Prof. Lothar Krappman**  
**Fmr Member, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child**

*"I closely cooperated with representatives of CCHR during my membership in the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. CCHR provided solid, comprehensive and enlightening information on mental health issues with a strong emphasis on children...[I] found CCHR obviously makes available in-depth research results...The chapters in a lot of countries have impact on the political debates and legislation."*

**U.S. Congressman Ron Paul**

*"CCHR efforts have been crucial to raising public awareness of the threat to liberty posed by the scheme to subject all children to intrusive screening without parental consent. I congratulate CCHR for its efforts to protect individuals from cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment."*

**The Hon. Raymond N. Haynes  
Former California State Assemblyman**

*“CCHR is renowned for its longstanding work aimed at preventing the inappropriate labeling and drugging of children.... The contributions that the Citizens Commission on Human Rights International has made to the local, national and international areas on behalf of mental health issues are invaluable and reflect an organization devoted to the highest ideals of mental health services.”*

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