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Date: September 17, 2013

To: Health and Wellness Commission

From: Monique Stanton, President & CEO at CARE of Southeastern Michigan

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CARE of Southeastern Michigan's mission is to educate, link and support individuals, families, businesses and communities affected by family concerns, workplace challenges, mental health conditions and the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Each year we serve over 20,000 people in Macomb County and throughout southeastern Michigan.

As an organization committed to supporting individuals impacted by substance abuse conditions and mental health concerns, I commend the efforts of the Mental Health and Wellness Commission. As you continue to enhance Michigan's current behavioral health system, please consider the following points:

- Substance abuse prevention programming is a critical component to a Recovery Oriented Systems of Care and overall health and wellness. Evidence based substance abuse prevention programs teach critical skills to children, teens, and adults about making healthy and positive choices to reduce the overall negative impact of the misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Prevention efforts are also critical in changing community norms related to the permissiveness of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug misuse and abuse.
- Access to substance abuse treatment is an essential component of overall health and wellness for individuals throughout Michigan. In implementing a Recovery Oriented Systems of Care throughout Michigan, it is critical to have a multi-faceted treatment and service delivery system for those impacted by addiction. A comprehensive service delivery system should include detox, residential treatment, intensive outpatient treatment, medicated assisted treatment, outpatient treatment, case management services, peer recovery support, and wrap around care.
- Children and adults impacted by the prenatal exposure to alcohol are in need of critical services. Individuals living with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder face significant difficulties in life, including struggles with school success, job stability, and interaction with the criminal justice system. Families with a child with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder face significant struggles in obtaining a diagnosis for their child and then receiving ongoing supportive service the child. Children and adults with a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder need a better state infrastructure that works collaboratively between physical health, behavioral health, human services, criminal justice, child welfare, and education systems to better address and meet their needs.

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Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like additional data from CARE of Southeastern Michigan or more information about my public comments. I can be reached at 586.218.5267 or mstanton@careofsem.com.

Sincerely,

Monique Stanton, MA
President & CEO