

December 31, 2015

To: Commissioner Murray, J.D. Department of Developmental Services

From: Michelle Rivelli, M.D., F.A.A.P.
22 Woodvale Road
West Haven, CT 06516

Re: STS Recommendations

Dear Commissioner Murray,

As the parent of a 21 year old young woman with autism and intellectual disability and as a pediatrician serving numerous individuals with disabilities I strongly support the closure of Southbury Training School and the reorganization of the DDS regional centers with strict supervision and elimination of the excessive overtime and bureaucratic costs associated with these centers. It is fact that individuals with the same or more severe needs are being served at less cost in locations served by private providers and by family members. It is a travesty that many disabled individuals, their caregivers, and elderly parents are isolated and suffering with either no services or horribly inadequate services while others receive "Cadillac" care. This system has to stop. Our loved ones deserve equal consideration across the state of CT regardless of region and the seemingly nontransparent and archaic system currently in place. As my own daughter is on her 8th day of "vacation" from school and I have been trying 24/7 to keep her occupied and happy, and in the few minutes I have taken to write this she is engaging in self stimulatory activity and becoming agitated, I am unable to cite the already well documented reasons for closing Southbury. Suffice it to say, this is the necessary and right decision.

Sincerely,

Michelle Rivelli, M.D., F.A.A.P.