

My name is Dorothy Fish. The Five Year plan does not include any language about maintaining services for very medically involved individuals who reside in state regional centers and group homes. Our son Todd is a client and resident at The Hartford Regional Center. He is 48 years old and needs a home with a 24 hour nursing staff. He is a brittle diabetic that requires 4 insulin injections a day and testing of his blood sugar 6 times a day. This is only one of his many medical issues. He is also legally blind. The staff is his family giving him the same excellent care that my husband and I gave him for 32 years and can no longer do. The staff is so aware of warnings signs that indicate that he is becoming Hypoglycemic. Some signs take years to recognize, which they have developed. Besides our son needing all this medical knowledge and care given to him by the staff they treat him as if he was their son, brother or family member.

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The private residential providers licensed by DDS are not funded enough to ensure their workers are paid living wages and benefits, resulting in a high turnover rate that can ultimately drive the quality of care down. My son is happy and has special and endearing names for each staff member. The staff members at the Hartford Regional Center have been with him for many years. Changing his home and staff would be devastating to him. Please consider my son and the many others who need a high level of care when drafting the final 5 year plan and advocate for more funding for DDS.

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