

My name is Kathy Day. I am the caregiver for my 24 year old godson, who suffers from schizophrenia. Last year, he was assigned to an FSP after having back to back hospitalizations. I was optimistic, as I was aware of the the "Whatever it takes" attitude for FSPs. The FSP he was linked to is funded by Sacramento County MHSA dollars.

When he started with this FSP, he had a severe phobia of riding in cars (or any moving vehicles). I asked the case managers to help him to overcome this. The came to our home once or twice a week, and the psychiatrist came out a few times as well. The doctor prescribed medications, but the clinicians did nothing to alleviate his fear of riding in a car. After a few visits, the doctor decided that my godson was being difficult and refused to come to our home. She required that he come into her office, eighteen miles from our home, knowing he still feared riding in cars. (He believed the 'spirits' would cause him to die if he rode in a car). Still, the doctor refused to come see him and refused to refill his meds. The case manager came to our home to 'help', but only suggested that since my godson couldn't ride in a car, perhaps he could take a taxi. Yes, a taxi. I reminded the case manager that taxis are also cars. He also suggested he ride a bicycle the eighteen miles to the clinic. This was no practical, at all.

My godson couldn't get in a car, so his meds were abruptly stopped. He began to decompensate. He was evaluated for a 5150 hold by one of the case managers and it was determined he did not meet criteria. The next day, although no one else had evaluated him, the Supervisor from the FSP sent the Folsom Police Department to transport my godson to the Treatment Center. They were not to evaluate him, only to take him--in handcuffs--to the Treatment Center so that he could receive a prescription for meds. This is an expensive solution, when the doctor could have simply refilled his medication. Due to the hold that was written, he was transferred to Heritage Oaks and held for several days, as the doctor (with my input) felt he was on the wrong meds.

Later, I obtained a copy of the hold that was written. It contained many falsehoods, including that my godson was suicidal because he wouldn't ride in a car and that he had NOT been in treatment for three months (the entire time he was with the FSP?). He has never been suicidal. He had been receiving 'treatment' for almost six years at that point. He was traumatized further by being held in the hospital after being denied medication simply because he was too ill to ride in a car.

The mantra "Whatever it Takes" seems instead to be "Whatever We Want". This is not the intent of MHSA. The FSPs need more oversight and more sensitivity training. They also need to be honest and to comply with the law.

Thank you,  
Kathy Day