

New Blog Offers Electroshock Victims & Families a Forum to Speak Out

CCHR's public awareness blog provides facts and warnings about electroconvulsive therapy and the need to ban it.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, December 18, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The mental health watchdog [Citizens Commission on Human Rights](#) (CCHR) International has launched an information blog on the dangers of electroconvulsive therapy (also known as electroshock treatment or ECT)—the practice of sending up to 460 volts of electricity through the brain, damaging it in a brutal effort to alleviate depression. The www.TruthAboutECT.org blog site was created to bring about public awareness of the serious risks associated with ECT and allow survivors of the “treatment” or their family members, friends or doctors to share their stories warning about how damaging the practice is.

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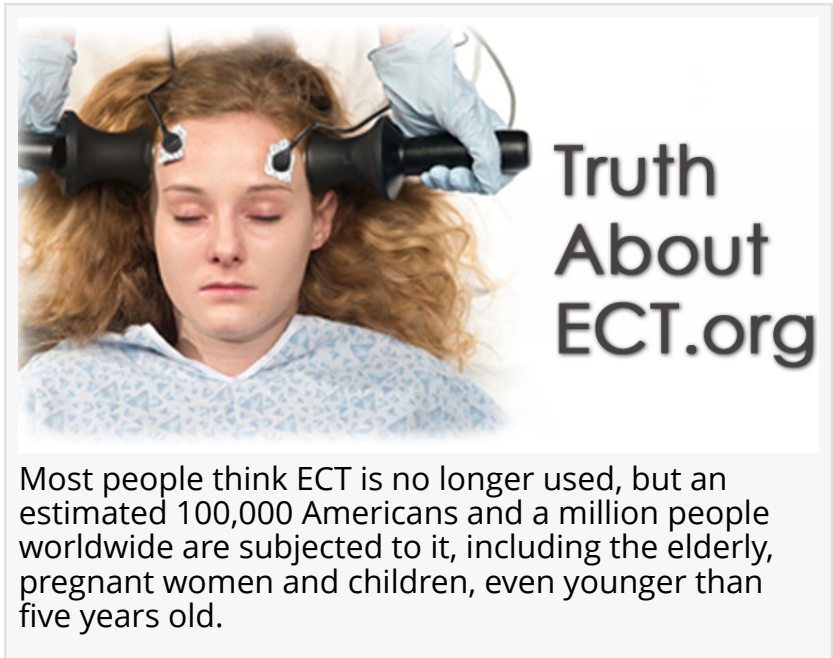
ECT should be banned. The device used to administer it has never undergone clinical trials to prove it is safe and effective.”

Jan Eastgate, CCHR International President

CCHR International president, Ms. Jan Eastgate, said: “ECT should be banned. The device used to administer it has never undergone clinical trials to prove it is safe and effective. Most people think ECT is no longer used, but an estimated 100,000 Americans and a million people worldwide are subjected to it, including the elderly, pregnant women and children, even younger than five years old. The fact that within a short period, more than 57,000 people signed our petition in support of a ban on ECT is an indication of the public outrage that it even exists.” [Click here to sign the petition.](#)

Eastgate said the blog offers people a forum to submit articles, stories and video testimony about how ECT harms lives, especially evidence of severe memory loss and brain damage. “In this way, they can join the movement to ban this abhorrent and torturous practice,” she added.

She said equating ECT with torture is supported by decades of evidence, including several United Nations reports from the Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) that have supported a ban on all forced medical interventions against persons with disabilities, including the administration of electroshock, psychosurgery, and mind-altering drugs. [1] HRC put it more strongly earlier this year. According to its “Mental health and human rights” report, countries “should reframe and recognize these practices as constituting torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment



or punishment...." [2]

Speak Out: Electroshock Causes Brain Damage

Eastgate said the blog can be used to speak out against ECT. She charged the FDA with covering up the brain damage ECT causes in order to protect a \$5 billion a year electroshock industry in the U.S. alone. In December 2015, the FDA proposed that the ECT device risk classification be reduced to make it more available, which the American Psychiatric Association (APA) supported. In fact, in a letter to the FDA, the APA wanted more children to receive electroshock, stating that having access to it is "especially meaningful in children and adolescents," despite potential harm to their developing brains and bodies. In 2001, an APA Task Force report on ECT even recommended that "brain damage should not be included in the ECT consent form as a potential risk of treatment." As such, the term has almost disappeared from psychiatric literature or nomenclature regarding ECT. Nowhere in the FDA's 2015 proposal to reduce the risk classification of ECT devices does it mention brain damage, CCHR informs. [3] [4]



Ban Electroshock (ECT) Device Being Used on Children, the Elderly and Vulnerable Patients



CCHR has helped to enact more than 180 laws protecting individuals from abusive or coercive mental health practices since it was formed over 49 years ago, including a ban on electroshock use on children in four U.S. states and in Western Australia.

ECT Device Maker Admits "Permanent Brain Damage"

Yet, recently faced with a legal challenge to ECT causing such damage, one U.S. ECT device manufacturer issued a warning in its new ECT risk disclosures that there is a risk of "permanent brain damage." [Click here](#) to read more about legal cases involving ECT. [5] [6]

But ECT "works," according to psychiatrists by causing seizures. Most neurologists regard it as self-evident that epileptic seizures cause brain damage and that all injury to an intact brain is harmful. And while psychiatrists might claim that the newer ECT procedures and devices lessen the risk of damage, Dr. Kenneth Castleman, a biomedical engineer who has served on the faculty at Caltech and The University of Texas and on the research staff at USC and UCLA, has provided evidence that the newer models of the ECT device "actually elevate the risk of brain damage." [7] [8]

CCHR encourages as many ECT survivors and their family or friends to write in support of a ban and share their experiences on TruthAboutECT.org. It also encourages medical professionals, including psychiatrists opposed to ECT, to submit articles and blogs.

About CCHR: Initially established by the Church of Scientology and renowned psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz in 1969, CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections. L. Ron Hubbard, founder of Scientology, first brought psychiatric imprisonment to wide public notice: "Thousands and

thousands are seized without process of law, every week, over the 'free world' tortured, castrated, killed. All in the name of 'mental health,'" he wrote in March 1969. For more information visit www.cchrflorida.org.

References:

- [1] A/HRC/22/53, "Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Juan E. Méndez," United Nations, General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Twenty-second Session, Agenda Item 3, 1 Feb. 2013.
- [2] "Mental Health and Human Rights," United Nations Human Rights Council, 39th session; 10–28 Sept. 2018, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/MentalHealth/A_HRC_39_36_EN.pdf.
- [3] Letter to Robert M. Califf, M.D., Commissioner, U.S. Food and Drug Administration, from the American Psychiatric Association, March 10, 2016, <https://psychiatry.org/File%20Library/Psychiatrists/Advocacy/Federal/APA-FDA-ECT-reclassification-comments-03102016.pdf>.
- [4] American Psychiatric Association Committee on Electroconvulsive Therapy. (2001). The practice of electroconvulsive therapy: Recommendations for treatment, training, and privileging: A task force report of the American Psychiatric Association (2nd ed.). Arlington, VA, US: American Psychiatric Association, p. 102.
- [5] Jose Riera and Deborah Chase, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, v. MECTA Corporation; Somatics, LLC, Case No.: 2:17-cv-06686 RGK(PJWx), United States District Court Central District of California, Sept. 11, 2017.
- [6] http://www.thymatron.com/downloads/System_IV_Regulatory_Update.pdf.
- [7] Thomas Szasz, M.D., Coercion as Cure: A Critical History of Psychiatry, (Transaction Publications, 2010) p. 135.
- [8] Jonathon Emord, Rick Moxon, Citizens Petition on ECT presented to the FDA Commissioner, 2016, <http://emord.com/blawg/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/1-ECT-Citizen-Petition.pdf>, p. 40.

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