

CCHR Calls for Investigation of Systemic Betrayal and Rape in the Psychiatric-Behavioral System

CCHR points to the sexual assault of patients in psychiatric facilities as a despicable and common occurrence which warrants state and federal investigation.

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, August 27, 2019

/EINPresswire.com/ -- In a ground-breaking decision on August 12 2019, a Ventura, California jury awarded \$13.25 million to three women who were sexually assaulted by a staff member at the for-profit psychiatric facility, Aurora Vista del Mar Hospital in Ventura. The facility was sued, along with its parent company Signature Healthcare Services, LLC, for employing someone who had previously been

convicted of statutory rape. The staff member was also convicted of sex crimes related to the three Vista patients, including rape of an incompetent person. The jury found Signature, which owns 15 hospitals in six states, acted with malice or oppression and, bore part of the responsibility in not taking action to prevent the harm. [1] Media across the country reported on the case, including national TV network affiliates, Los Angeles Times, Washington Times USA Today and Kaiser Health News.

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Today, there are 32 criminal statutes in the U.S. that protect patients from therapist sexual assault and we will continue to work to ensure that psychiatrists & psychologists are not above the law.”

Citizens Commission on Human Rights

jarring reality that 7-10 percent of male psychiatrists and psychologists sexually abuse their patients, the group says. [2] It begs the question, as The Boston Magazine once posed, “Why is psychiatry such a hotbed of sexual misconduct?” [3] The sexual crimes committed by psychiatrists are estimated at 37 times greater than rapes occurring in the general community, one U.S. law firm stated, estimating that about 150,000 female patients have been assaulted. [4]

Of 18 psychiatrists, psychologists and counselors convicted of crimes so far this year, 12 were for



CCHR's mission is to eradicate abuses committed under the guise of mental health and enact patient and consumer protections.

sexual crimes against patients, including sexual battery and child molestation. In many cases, their names will be added to the [sexual offender](#) register. Other convictions relate to illegal or dangerous prescribing of controlled substances and fraud.

In one case, a behavioral therapist was found guilty of second-degree rape, second-degree sodomy and six counts of first-degree sexual abuse of a 13-year-old autistic boy. The therapist was sentenced to 8 1/3 years in prison. [5] Combined, the mental health therapists face over 100 years in prison. An additional 21 mental health practitioners—two in Florida—have been charged this year.

CCHR says this culture of abuse is rife. In recent years CCHR has documented systemic patient sexual abuse in for-profit psychiatric-behavioral hospitals, including 21 incidents of patients, including children, being sexually assaulted in one chain of behavioral facilities.

- Two hospital staff were convicted and jailed for a combined 35 years over the sexual abuse of residents and two facilities closed down in the wake of sexual abuse incidents and other allegations. [6]
- A hospital staff member pleaded guilty to sexual abuse and was placed on the state's convicted sex offender registry. [7]
- A mental health technician was sentenced to 25 years in prison for sexually abusing six girls at a Girls Juvenile Residential Facility in Florida. [8]

According to a U.S. national survey of therapist-client sex involving minors, one out of 20 clients who had been sexually abused by their therapist was a minor, the average age being 7 for girls and 12 for boys. The youngest child was three. [9]

This year, justice officials in court proceedings commented on the “position of trust” that mental health “professionals” violate when [sexually abusing patients](#). In one case a State Attorney General also described the psychiatrist as using “his position of power and authority to rape and demean our victim. His predatory acts deserve nothing less than the maximum sentence. It is my sincere hope that the defendant will spend the rest of his life behind bars so he is not allowed to hurt anyone again.” [10]



The headquarters for CCHR Florida are located in downtown Clearwater.

Furthermore, those therapists who report having sex with their patients are often repeat offenders with some surveys noting over 50 percent of male therapists report sexual involvement with more than one patient. [11] A Canadian study put the repeat offenders at 80 percent and many had undergone personal analysis or psychotherapy in an unsuccessful effort to be rehabilitated. [12]

CCHR says that such treachery often occurs when the victim is already traumatized. One report by the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council in Australia revealed that 70 percent of women who end up in psychiatric hospitals have been victims of some form of sexual abuse. [13]

CCHR has successfully worked to obtain laws that ensure psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists and behavioral counselors are not above the law. Today, there are 32 criminal statutes in the U.S. that protect patients from therapist sexual assault.



The Florida chapter of CCHR is a non-profit mental health watchdog dedicated to the protection of children.

But CCHR International wants to see stronger penalties. The level of abuse also begs the question how such "well-trained" psychiatrists and psychologists, who know better than to sexually abuse patients, believe they have the license to violate this. It wants medical schools and colleges that may have taught such conduct, to equally share in the burden of legal responsibility.

CCHR encourages anyone who has knowledge of a psychiatrist, psychologist or psychotherapist sexually abusing patients to please report this in confidence to CCHR.

In an earlier press release Signature Healthcare Services, LLC, was erroneously reported to have facilities in Florida.

SOURCES:

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[10] "Former Daytona Salvation Army counselor found guilty of coercing client into sex act," The Dayton Beach News-Journal, 17 Jan. 2019, <https://www.news-journalonline.com/news/20190117/former-daytona-salvation-army-counselor-found-guilty-of-coercing-client-into-sex-act>

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