



## Wisconsin Council on Mental Health

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Dec. 3, 2012

Rep. Dan Knodl, Chair  
Room 218 North  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber, Vice Chair  
Room 122 North  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 8953  
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Reps. Knodl and Bernard Schaber:

The Wisconsin Council on Mental Health (WCMH) is the Governor's statutorily appointed council with authority to advise the Governor, Legislature and state agencies regarding mental health policy and funding. The WCMH recently reviewed information related to the concerns of the Legislative Council Study Committee on Legal Interventions with Persons with Alzheimers Disease and Related Dementias. Based on this review the WCMH supported the following revision to Chapter 51, Wi. Stats.

Revisions to Chapter 51 should be made, to include the following bolded statement in Chapter 51.01 (13) (b),

(b) "Mental illness", for purposes of involuntary commitment, means a substantial disorder of thought, mood, perception, orientation, or memory which grossly impairs judgment, behavior, capacity to recognize reality, or ability to meet the ordinary demands of life, but does not include alcoholism **or people with degenerative brain disease.**

The WCMH does not believe that Chapter 51 emergency detention should be used for individuals with dementia as these are not treatable conditions within the mental health system.

Thank you for your consideration of the WCMH's recommendation on this matter.

Sincerely:

Shel Gross, Chair  
Wisconsin Council on Mental Health

Copies:  
Mary Matthias, Brian Larson  
Legislative Council Staff