

Brian Hannold - Niagara Falls

My name is Brian Hannold and I have severe mental health issues. I have had many diagnoses over the years and have dealt with many mental health organizations within that time. I have been receiving SSI/SSD since before I even knew what that was. I have been passed from group home to group home my whole life and was not properly given any tools to manage my anger and I grew into an adult who now struggles. A lot of my mental health issues are anger based and throughout the years I have come to find that most mental health institutes are either not equipped or are not willing to help me manage my level of anger but instead they find it is easier to dismiss me the minute I show my anger forcing me to have to start over at another facility. My most recent experience happened when I was a patient at S6 at Niagara Falls Memorial. I went in there because I could not get ahold of someone on the phone, and I needed a medication refill. The receptionist was rude to me and then proceeded to get my counselor and told them I called her the N word which I did not. She got me kicked out which caused me to have a mental lapse.

I started to hit myself in front of the head of the mental health department and my counselor and they told me they could not keep me on as a client before calling security and having them escort me off the property. I then proceeded to bash my head off a cast iron bench in front of the facility while they watched on. Instead of taking me to the psych ward in the building or the psych ER because I was obviously not in a good mental state, they told me to get my bloody ass off the property and to not come back. I ended up giving myself post-concussion syndrome. When they sent in my last script, they didn't even send a full 30-day script to give me enough time to find a new facility. They gave me a bridged script which did not last me even a week.

This experience forced me to deal with my mental health issues without meds and go to another facility to seek treatment. It has also become difficult to afford copays and even get good mental health coverage in Niagara Falls because they took out most insurances here and also, they don't provide automatic Medicaid for people on SSD even though we can barely afford living. There are no affordable day programs in Niagara Falls and there are also no support groups for people with mental illnesses who are going through family court. No advocates either to help speak up for you when family

court railroads you based on your mental health issues (Even though the child is old enough to speak their mind and enjoys the time you spend together they still put a stigma on people with mental issues). There should also be a parenting class for people with mental illnesses so they can improve how to become the best parents they know how to be. I believe that there should be a better understanding of mental health in children so it can be recognized before it is too late to be managed. There should also be a group for fathers with mental health issues. I hope I provided you with enough insight into the chink in the armor of mental health treatments and I hope you can help make a change.