Letters to the editor:


Bloomington Pantagraph: “Senate should restore drug treatment funding” (Aug. 4). Letter signed by Bishop Warren Freiheit, Central-Southern Illinois Synod, ELCA.

Daily Herald (Chicago suburbs): “Illinois must fight substance abuse” – a letter to the editor from Melody Heaps, founder and president, Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities. (Sept. 27)


Other media coverage featuring LSSI:

Articles in the September 9 Chicago Tribune (via AP) — “Drug-treatment program cuts 27 positions” — and the September 10 Daily Herald — “Elgin treatment center blames Blagojevich for cuts, layoffs” — noted that LSSI was cutting staff in substance abuse treatment programs in Elgin and Chicago. The cuts would also eliminate Project SAFE in Chicago, which provides treatment and support services to women with children. In addition, the September 10 Capitol Fax, a daily fax to state legislators on current legislative issues, mentioned LSSI twice in a discussion of the House’s funds sweeps bill, also reporting that LSSI was laying off staff at its treatment centers in Chicago and Elgin.

WBEZ (Chicago Public Radio) mentioned on a September 10 broadcast that LSSI is “...laying off 27 workers and turning away 1 in 4 patients due to budget cuts by Governor Rod Blagojevich...” and “...Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is calling on state lawmakers to restore funding for drug treatment programs when they return to Springfield this week.”

Saukvalley.com published “State cuts could impact LSSI” on September 11, mentioning impacts to other providers in the area.

WFLD TV (Channel 32-Fox, Chicago) reported that LSSI is laying off 27 employees in its drug treatment programs on one of its September 10 morning broadcasts.

A story produced by the Illinois Radio Network (IRN), which serves more than 50 stations in the state, aired on Aug. 4. The story featured interviews with Bishop Warren Freiheit, Central-Southern Synod, ELCA, and Kathy Dwyer, associate executive director of LSSI’s Behavioral Health Services. IRN aired another story — “Human Services Cuts” — on September 26, noting that the General Assembly had approved substance abuse treatment funding on September 23, and that LSSI, along with other providers, were calling on the governor to sign funding restoration bills.

The Illinois News Connection produced “Illinois Budget Clock is Ticking, Worry Lines Deepen.” At least 40 stations ran the story on Aug. 5, including WBBM Newsradio 78, which featured an interview with Kathy Dwyer, associate executive director of LSSI’s Behavioral Health Services.

On September 27, WGIL (Galesburg, radio 14) aired a story about layoffs in human services as a result of Illinois budget cuts. LSSI’s layoff of 27 BHS workers was cited, and Kathy Dwyer, associate executive director of LSSI, was quoted in the story.

Medill Reports, which is written and produced by graduate journalism students at Northwestern University’s Medill school, published “Empty offices Symptomatic of cuts” on October 8 about the $135.6 million in human services cuts for Illinois FY2008-2009. The story focused on the budget cuts and how they are affecting LSSI’s Portage-Cragin Counseling Center in Chicago. Cheryl Oseguera, program director, and Tim Sheehan, associate executive director of LSSI’s mental health services, were quoted in the story. Oseguera notes that “The clients are starting to become more symptomatic” as a result of the cuts in services.
Related coverage featuring other treatment providers:

State Journal-Register (Springfield): “Advocates say Blagojevich's budget cuts go too deep” (July 14).

Quad Cities Times (Moline, Rock Island) article by Kurt Erickson: “Outcry building over budget cuts in Illinois” (July 14).

Quad Cities Times (Moline, Rock Island) article by Deirdre Cox Baker: “Advocates: ‘Most vulnerable’ in Q-C could be victims of Illinois budget” (July 14).

Bloomington Pantagraph article by Paul Swiech: “Budget cuts will impair local social service programs” (July 14).

Marion Daily Republican article by Ryan Keith: “Budget cuts hit substance abuse programs hard” (July 15).

Illinois Times (illinois.gyrosite.com) article by Dusty Rhodes: “First domino to fall - Governor’s cuts to drug-treatment programs will have wide-reaching effects” (July 17).

St. Louis Post-Dispatch article by Terry Hillig and Kevin McDermott: “Illinois budget cuts to have broad impact” (July 20).

Chicago Tribune article by Mary Schmich: “Teens at risk, from drugs and the state” (July 23).

Chicago Journal (Near Chicago Loop, West town) article by Rob Heidrick, Medill News Service: “Protesters want slashed funds back in budget; $43 million in cuts would hit Near West, West Loop facilities” (July 23).

CBS-2 Mike Flannery: “Truth In Politics: Dumbest Budget Cut Ever? Governor Cuts Funding To Money-Saving Drug- And Alcohol-Treatment Centers” (July 23).

Southtown Star article by William Lee: “A Safe Haven not safe from governor’s budget cuts” (July 23).

WSIL TV (Channel 3/ABC affiliate), The Southern Illinois News Station, aired a story on how the budget cuts will affect substance abuse services: “State Human Services Hit Hard” (July 24).

Chicago Tribune: two columns by Eric Zorn – “Doomsday battle goes to the brink” (July 29) and “Forget doom! A quick fix to budget exists” (Aug. 5).

Southtown Star article by Rich Miller (who also publishes Capitol Fax, a daily political newsletter, and thecapitolfaxblog.com): “While legislators fight, people are losing their homes” (July 29).

Champaign News-Gazette article by Mary Schenk: “State drug-funding budget cuts mean layoffs, program cuts” (July 30).

WBBM 780 (Chicago) reported by Mary Frances Bragiel: “Substance Abuse Center Victim of Budget Cuts” (July 30).

Commercial-News (Danville) article by Jennifer Bailey: “Budget cuts hurt local drug treatment” (July 31).

Rockford Register-Star article by Bob Schaper: “I owe them everything”; Alcohol and drug treatment providers are worried about the effect of budget cuts on abusers and their neighbors” (July 31).

Chicago Tribune letter to the editor by Calvin S. Morris, executive director, Community Renewal Society: “Recent Blagojevich substance abuse veto disservice to clinically ill” (Aug. 1).

Rockford Register-Star editorial: “Substance abuse fund cuts a disgrace to all Illinoisans” (Aug. 2).

Chicago Sun-Times column by Mary Mitchell: “State leaders fail those who need help most, Women’s Treatment Center funding cut bad for everyone” (Aug. 5).

Southtown Star article by Hope Larkin Barzowski: “Success Stories prove A Safe Haven’s indispensability” (Aug. 6).


Commercial-News (Danville) story by Brian L. Huchel: “Funding cuts cause treatment delays” (Aug. 15).

The Southern (Carbondale) front-page story by Codell Rodriguez: “Franklin-Williamson Human Services to call for funding restoration” (Aug. 17).

Chicago Tribune article by Jeffrey Meitrodt and Monique Garcia: “Drug abuse centers hit hard by state budget cuts; Thousands of clients could see services eliminated” (Aug. 18).

The Southern (Carbondale) front-page article by John D. Homan: “Human service providers urge plea to legislators, governor” (Aug. 19).
Quad Cities Times (Moline Dispatch, Argus Leader) article by Jonathan Turner: “Addiction agencies cope with cuts” (Aug 19).

Bloomington Pantagraph article by Paul Swiech: “Substance abuse intervention programs cut at 28 schools” (Aug. 26).

Daily Herald article by Madhu Krishnamurthy: “State cuts force Lake Co. health department to slash programs” (Aug. 26).

Champaign News-Gazette editorial: “Playing budget games with lives, state services” (Aug. 31).

Champaign News-Gazette story by Mary Schenk: “Prairie Center detox unit closed, reducing choices for addicts” (Sept. 1).

Bloomington Pantagraph editorial: “Drug treatment cuts will be costly in long run” (Sept. 3).

The Huffington Post column by Greg Harris: Governor Blagojevich, Do Right on Substance Abuse Cuts” (Sept. 5).

State Journal-Register (Springfield) editorial: “Our Opinion: Modest hope for solution to state’s woes” (Sept. 7).

The Southern front-page story by Blackwell Thomas: “Social service workers: Price of prevention, less than that of prison” (Sept. 9).

Peoria Journal-Star story by Frank Radosevich II: “Treatment group warns of budget cuts’ impact; CEO says mental health and addiction patients could be pushed onto the streets” (Sept. 9).

Galesburg Register Mail story by Susan Kaufman: “Drug treatment agencies on the ropes” (Sept. 16).

The Journal-Standard (Freeport) article by Travis Morse: “Drug treatment facilities seek restored funds” (Sept. 16).

The Southern (Carbondale) ran an editorial: “Contact your lawmakers about budget cuts” (Sept. 16).

Commercial-News (Danville): “Forum draws a crowd” by Barbara Greenberg, who reports on a public form regarding Illinois' recent human services budget cuts. (Oct. 3)

Illinois Channel Web site: “Illinois Senate's Week in Review” (October 11) discusses the fact that Gov. Rod Blagojevich signed legislation (SB 790) on Oct. 7 but has not yet approved SB 1103, which would restore money to social service programs, parks and historic sites. The article notes that State Sen. Tim Bivins (R-Dixon), who typically would not support the use of this money makes an exception in this case because of the potential economic loss to northwest Illinois citizens and businesses from the closing of the parks and historic sites, as well as cuts to social services. The article also noted that over the last six years, the state has consistently lagged behind in bill payments.


Bloomington Pantagraph; “Blagojevich says restoring cuts could be gamble” by John O’Connor, Associated Press (Oct. 20)

Capitol Fax (Springfield): “Guv Hints at Cutting Saved Programs” (October 21), where the writer opines: “The outrage here is that mothers with drug and alcohol problems have literally been thrown into the street with their kids because of the governor’s budget cuts and the resulting feuds. People who have made mistakes and been busted can’t get out of jail and into a treatment program because those programs have been forced to drastically scale back or shut down.

“Power games are no stranger to Illinois. But I cannot ever recall a governor who would cavalierly toss aside human beings as so much detritus in order to settle a political score.”

Champaign News-Gazette: “Governor: Restoring budget cuts would be gamble” (Oct. 21).