

To everyone who makes decisions on behalf Eleanor Slater Hospital,

9/25/20

My name is Amy Drake. I am 43 years old, a registered voter and prior patient of the Cranston facility of Eleanor Slater Hospital. I am a current patient of Zambrano Hospital. Both facilities saved, and continue to, improve my life. When I was 38 years old, I had a seizure due to chronic epilepsy that put me in a coma. I was stabilized at Fatima Hospital then transferred to Eleanor Slater. Eleanor Slater Hospital does such a great job helping people who have medical issues for the long term. I am one of them. I was treated at the Cranston facility for approximately 2 years as I recovered from not being able to talk, eat, move or even know basic information, such as colors and shapes.

You can imagine that as I began to regain my physical and mental abilities, I became more and more depressed, feeling isolated in a hospital setting. One of my special memories about the caring staff is the 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party they surprised me with. They took the time to help me through some very difficult moments. This is one example of how Eleanor Slater goes above and beyond, seeing the needs of each person.

Around that time, the decision was made for me to transfer to Zambarano to be with other people my age. I was just learning to walk and had leg braces to help me stand and take steps. That move was literally the best "step" I ever took. They supported me as I yelled, cried, and on some days even refused therapy because of how hard it was. They still do. I am now happy that although I have a wheelchair, I can walk with a walker and the reassurance of someone by my side. I have come such a long way.

I am not just a patient in a bed here. I am a mother and daughter as well. I have a 22-year-old daughter and a very involved and supportive father. He knows how much progress I've made. As a professional advocate, he stands behind all the good that this hospital does for so many. Since being here, I've gained mental strength, hope, and a new plan for my future. I am waiting for an opening at a group home that focuses on brain injury recovery. This is a long wait but having a place like Eleanor Slater makes it all worthwhile. Without this hospital, I'd have nowhere to go.

I am lucky that I have a bright future, but there are other people who are not as lucky and need long term care. I see this in those with mental illness. The nurses and staff keep them doing well, where otherwise, they would possibly stop their medication, decline and not be able to live well in the community. This hospital is more like a home, caring for its family members in all ways to keep them healthy. You would never realize how critical this is, especially for patients with no family of their own. Whatever decisions you make regarding the future of this hospital, please remember us all.

(This is my actual signature, which I had to relearn how to write when coming here)

*Amy Drake*

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