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Support for S-3099 and H-8247: Renaming Drug Court to Recovery Court

Dear Honorable Members of the Rhode Island General Assembly,

On behalf of Bradley Hospital, I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill S-3099 and House Bill H-8247, which propose renaming the state's Drug Court to Recovery Court. This change represents a meaningful and necessary progression in how we address substance use disorders by prioritizing long-term healing, dignity and sustained recovery over short-term compliance.

The term Drug Court can unintentionally reinforce stigma and limit the broader understanding of addiction as a chronic, treatable health condition. Recovery Court reflects a more modern, evidence-based approach that centers recovery as a lifelong process and acknowledges the complex social, psychological and medical factors involved.

Recovery Courts emphasize individualized care and long-term support systems, which help individuals rebuild stable, productive lives. By shifting the focus from punishment and compliance to recovery and resilience, we improve outcomes and strengthen families and communities.

In a state that has been deeply impacted by the overdose crisis, adopting the Recovery Court name sends a powerful message that Rhode Island is committed to treating substance use disorder as a public health issue first, while still maintaining accountability and public safety. It is a compassionate, practical and forward-thinking approach that aligns with national best practices.

For these reasons, Bradley Hospital strongly supports the passage of S-3099 and H-8247 and the adoption of the name "Recovery Court."

Sincerely,

Henry T Sachs III, MD
President