



# Consumer Council System of Maine

A Voice for Consumers of Mental Health Services

[www.maineccsm.org](http://www.maineccsm.org)

**FIRST DRAFT (11/16/2017)**

**GROUP NAME: THE STATEWIDE CONSUMER COUNCIL OF MAINE**

**DATE: November 8, 2017**

**THE ISSUE STATEMENT:**

**“Lack of actionable response to our Issue Statements from DHHS.”**

**THE ISSUE:**

The CCSM works hard to research issues and solutions to challenges consumers face in the community every day. The challenge we are now facing is that when DHHS responds it often is a description of what they are already doing to address things or agreeing with us without real engagement with the consumer community to move initiatives forward. Because these are valuable to both the consumer and State, we want to find new ways to use the resource that these Issue Statements are to bring about real action/change. We also want to look at other ways to get our Issue Statements out to people who can help bring our concerns forward: for example; the Legislature and the press.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Ask SAMHS staff and the Commissioner how we can help get a response in a reasonable timeframe. Are there barriers we don't know about?
2. The CCSM and SAMHS and Commissioner have specific meetings regarding Issue Statements to have meaningful dialog specific to the particular Issue Statement We want to make sure all sides understand the importance of the issues and we work towards realistic solutions.
3. DHHS meets with Coordinating Committee to discuss the issue statement, i.e. SAMHS monthly meeting or, if necessary, at Commissioner's quarterly meeting.
4. After 30 days, CCSM will send a reminder to DHHS requesting a response to the issue statement.

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

- . To have a reciprocal discussion about the statement with all parties involved.
- . All involved will have a clear understanding of the issue to make issue statements more meaningful.
- . A more concerted effort will be made by DHHS Staff to attend all scheduled meetings.
- . We look towards broader venues to get the information out into the greater community.