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I came before this Commission in 2009 to bring to its attention that the number of pregnant women obtaining substance abuse treatment had fallen by half from what it had been until 2008, with no corresponding decrease in the number of pregnancies in Nevada and no evidence that the rate of substance abuse among pregnant women had decreased. This could only mean an increase in the number of babies born with substance-related birth defects, such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.

I was surprised when I was told by Dr. Cook, then Division Administrator, and by the deputy attorney general present at that meeting, that services for substance abuse were beyond the purview of the Commission. I was even more surprised to find that they were right: When substance abuse services were transferred from the Health Division to Mental Health and Developmental Services in 2007, the statutes were revised to take authority for overview of substance abuse services away from the Board of Health but didn't reassign it to the Mental Health and Developmental Services Commission or to anyone else. The Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency, SAPTA, had become an orphan agency.

This was remedied in 2013 with the creation of the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, re-naming this Commission the Commission on Behavioral Health, and revision of NRS 433.314 to assign to the Commission the *duty* to provide overview of substance abuse services. This expanded duty of the Commission is accurately stated in the opening paragraph of the draft letter to the Governor, but in the next paragraph services for substance abuse are conspicuously absent in the listing of what's reported on in the letter. And, in fact, the letter *doesn't* report on services for substance abuse. Nor does it report on services for co-occurring disorders.

This is despite the mandate of NRS 433.314 that - and I quote - "The Commission shall.. Report at the beginning of each year to the Governor... on the quality of the care and treatment provided for persons with... substance use disorders or persons with co-occurring disorders in this State and on any progress made toward improving the quality of that care and treatment."

This is no longer that Mental Health and Developmental Services Commission which had no authority to provide overview of substance abuse services back in 2009. This is the Behavioral Health Commission with the statutory *duty* to provide overview to these services. I encourage you to meet that duty and to revise the letter accordingly.

I presume that Kevin Quint, SAPTA Bureau Chief, has been regularly reporting to the Commission on services for substance abuse and co-occurring disorders, and on the difficulties that SAPTA-funded treatment programs have been having as their ability to

continue providing treatment for these disorders becomes increasingly dependent upon problematic Medicaid payment for doing so.

Finally, I should point out that while statistics for 2015 aren't in yet, as of 2014 the number of pregnant women receiving substance abuse treatment remains less than half what it was before 2008.

In any event, I encourage you meet the statutory mandate to report in the letter to the Governor "on the quality of the care and treatment provided for persons with... substance use disorders or persons with co-occurring disorders in this State and on any progress made toward improving the quality of that care and treatment."