A Mother's Story

Shared anonymously

Having lawyers involved in telling our very sick family members that they have the right to not accept treatment has caused them numerous setbacks and pain in their journey to recovery.

I have a son who has severe mental health issues and because he has the right not to take treatment has become homeless, ended up in shelters, picked up by the police. We have had him formed by myself, by the doctors and because he has rights, he can walk back out on the street with no place to go, no treatment. His right to not accept treatment has ended up in him doing drugs on the street and living in poverty. The treatment for mental health at this time seems to be the street or jail. If they end up in jail they are often put in isolation. In my son's case when he came out of isolation, he could barely talk.

I have tried to look after my son at home, but it became unsafe for me and impossible for one person to keep up with the amount of extra work and expense he caused.

I have worked all my life in health care and I am unable to get him the care that he needs and one of the main reasons is because he has rights when he is so sick he can not manage to care for himself. Lawyers have become doctors when they feel they should be advocating the rights of mental health -- this is wrong on so many levels.

The pain this has caused to the person needing treatment and their families is immeasurable.