



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**HAWAII RANKED AMONG TOP 15 STATES FOR
MENTAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**

HONOLULU – Hawaii improved from a position of “dead last” to one of the top 15 states according to the first state-by-state report on the nation’s mental healthcare system in more than 15 years. The report, *Grading the States: A Report on America’s Health Care System for Serious Mental Illnesses*, funded by the Stanley Family Foundation, was released by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

The report stated, “In the ensuing 16 years, through hard work and federal pressure, Hawaii is potentially poised to be applauded as most improved of any state in this report.” No states received an “A,” only five state received a “B,” and ten states received grades of “C+” or “C.” Hawaii’s overall grade was a “C.”

Highlights of the individual state report on Hawaii include recognition of the state’s re-invention of the Hawaii State Hospital; Dr. Thomas Hester’s leadership to turn around a failing system; an “A” grade for recovery supports; a transparent action plan that builds a community system with a solid foundation that can be sustainable long after court oversight leaves Hawaii; and Governor Lingle’s leadership to help “debunk” the stigma of mental illness and move insurance parity for mental illness from legislation to law.

The report also appropriately credits the role of the United States Department of Justice and the federal court in the continued development of Hawaii’s community based mental healthcare system.

The full report, individual state narratives and scoring tables are available on-line at www.nami.org/grades.

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