



MASSACHUSETTS
GUARDIANSHIP
POLICY INSTITUTE

January 30, 2026

Editor, Boston Globe
1 Exchange Place
Boston, MA 02109

Re: Boston Globe, Jan. 28, 2026: “Mass. hospitals are filling with patients who can’t make their own medical choices. What’s the solution?”

Dear Editors:

Kay Lazar’s excellent piece on January 28 once again shines a light on the plight of vulnerable people who are “stuck” in hospitals, waiting for a guardian to be appointed to make the medical decisions involved in transitioning to rehab or community placement.

Unfortunately, many of the most impaired patients return to the hospital again within weeks or months after discharge, despite having a guardian, and get “stuck” again. The guardian may have been appointed only temporarily, or was “voluntold” by a judge who had no other options. Either way, the guardian handles the discharge, but is out of the picture shortly afterward. The unsupported individual goes back to the ER, and the “stuck patient” cycle renews.

Many stakeholders believe that a Public Guardian is the way that Massachusetts can break this inhumane and horrifically expensive cycle. A pilot, Public Guardian Services, LLC (“PGS”), has developed an intensive, “social-work model” approach to guardianship that has broken the cycle, helped homeless individuals to stabilize, and moved nursing home patients into supported group or family settings. The Massachusetts Guardianship Policy Institute supports PGS, and we urge state and hospital policy-makers to learn more about it.

Very truly yours,

Peter M. Macy, J.D., Ed.M.
Massachusetts Guardianship Policy Institute