

**Bristol County District Attorney's Office  
C. Samuel Sutter  
District Attorney**

**Press Release  
October 21, 2010**

The Massachusetts Nurses Association presented Bristol County District Attorney Sam Sutter with the prestigious Advocate for Nursing Award last week during a special awards ceremony in Worcester. The award recognizes the contribution of an individual—who is not a nurse—to nurses and the nursing profession. The award was presented to District Attorney Sutter by Ellen Farley, RN-BC.

The Massachusetts Nurses Association chose District Attorney Sutter for the award because he “has given nurses new hope.”

The association said, “When District Attorney Sutter became aware of a long-standing court case that spanned several exhausting and frustrating years, he listened with great concern. The court case involved the appropriate placement of an assaultive patient within the Department of Mental Health. (DA Sutter) displayed empathy for the assaulted nurse who was further assaulted by the legal maneuverings of the defendant’s attorney. Mr. Sutter’s team was able to negotiate a successful resolution and the patient was appropriately placed in a setting outside the DMH. Additionally, Mr. Sutter agreed to meet with Taunton State Hospital’s administration to formulate a plan of cooperation between hospital staff, DMH, and the district attorney’s office which will reduce the timeline for resolution of high profile assault cases. Mr. Sutter is applauded for his willingness to intervene and we look forward to his continued advocacy on behalf of nurses. His work will ultimately lead to a major reduction in patient and staff assaults. The Massachusetts Nurses Association is grateful for District Attorney Sutter’s work and is pleased to present him with the MNA Advocate for Nurses Award.”

District Attorney Sutter said, “I am deeply honored by this award from the Massachusetts Nurses Association. As I said in my remarks at the awards ceremony, cases involving assaults against nurses at state hospitals present a recurring and extremely serious problem. I hope that with this successful result on the case, which led to this award, that we will start a trend throughout state institutions so that violent assaults against nurses get prosecuted effectively and without the inordinate delay that is too often associated with these cases because of the defendant’s mental health issues. I intend to use this case and this award as a launching point to do much more about this vital issue. Nurses who subject themselves everyday to the risk of violent assaults should not have to go through their workdays with the frustrated feeling that either charges will not be taken out, or if they are taken out, the case will get stuck in legal limbo and not go anywhere for years. The criminal justice system in Massachusetts needs to do much better and I am resolved to working together with the Massachusetts Nurses Association to make this happen.”

Since its founding in 1903, the Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA) has been the most powerful and effective voice on nursing and health care in the Commonwealth.

MNA created the Nurse Practice Act, the RN license designation, developed a uniform curriculum for the education of nurses, wrote the first code of ethics for nurses and passed, or helped to pass, nearly every state law governing nursing practice including the law allowing nurses to unionize in Massachusetts.

Today, the MNA is the largest union and professional association of registered nurses and health professionals in the state, and the third largest in the nation, representing more than 23,000 members working in 85 health care facilities, including 51 acute care hospitals, as well as a growing number of nurses and health professionals working in schools, visiting nurse associations, public health departments and state agencies.

For more information on the awards or the association, please contact the Massachusetts Nurses Association at 781-821-4625.