



ACMHAI

Association of Community Mental Health Authorities of Illinois

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To: Governor Patrick Quinn, Senate President Cullerton, Speaker Madigan and Members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

From: Association of Community Mental Health Authorities of Illinois (ACMHAI)

Re: Planned closures of state operated facilities housing people with severe mental illness and developmental disabilities

Date: October 7, 2011

It is the policy of this association to collaborate with the State of Illinois, Department of Human Services and other relevant stakeholders to planfully reduce the State's investment in State Operated Facilities (SOF) for people with mental illness or developmental disabilities. Decisions to close SOFs should be predicated on a well thought out plan which assures there are adequate beds for people who require the highest level of care in terms of restrictiveness and supervision. In addition, all dollars saved as the result of closure or reduction in beds should be fully allocated to support community-based care for people who are affected by the SOF reduction. Redirection of resources to community alternatives should include:

- Reinstatement of CHIPS funding to private hospitals to cover the cost of inpatient psychiatric services to the indigent population.
- Recruitment of additional medical staff to increase the number of private hospital beds.
- Development of community-based crisis beds as an adjunct and step down to inpatient services.
- Resources to expand psychiatric, nursing, case management, residential treatment and linkage case management to stabilize community treatment for the non-Medicaid population.
- Closure of Developmental Disabilities facilities accommodated with appropriate resources to address one-on-one care and medical issues.

It is ACMHAI's understanding that the State of Illinois DHS has not promulgated a long term plan for SOF closure or reduction of beds for people with mental illness or developmental disabilities. Input from ACMHAI and other community-based stakeholders has not been sought to determine the extent to which closures or bed reductions of SOFs should be implemented. Also, the State of Illinois DHS has a poor track record for transferring the savings which result from closures to community-based providers. Most recently, the Zeller Mental Health Center in Peoria, Illinois was closed and this resulted in a savings of about \$19,000,000 per year. Only \$4,000,000 of the savings was transferred to community-based providers.

ACMHAI is adamantly opposed to the current closures proposed by Governor Quinn, and views these decisions as arbitrary and capricious; furthermore, they were made, not in the best interest of clients served by these facilities, but as positioning for reappropriation of funding. Our opposition is based on the absence of a plan which is linked to an assessment of need and appropriately transitions people in these facilities to the community. Lastly, there is no evidence the State of Illinois DHS intends to transfer the savings from closures to community-based providers. Because of these deficiencies, ACMHAI believes the current round of closures is irresponsible and places people at risk.