



Pat Quinn, Governor

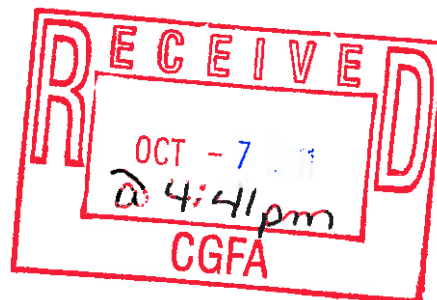
Michelle R.B. Saddler, Secretary

Office of the Secretary
401 South Clinton Street • Chicago, Illinois 60607
100 South Grand Avenue East • Springfield, Illinois 62762

October 7, 2011

VIA HAND DELIVERY AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

Mr. Dan Long
Executive Director
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706



Re: Closure of Tinley Park Mental Health Center

Dear Executive Director Long:

The Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) is in receipt of your letter of October 6, 2011 in which the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (CGFA) requests that DHS explain the differences between the recommendation for the closure of Tinley Park Mental Health Center (Tinley Park MHC) submitted on September 9, 2011 and the recommendation submitted on November 3, 2008, and the reason for those changes. DHS provides the below supplement to its September 9, 2011 recommendation in response to CGFA's request. With the September 9, 2011 filing of DHS' recommendation of closure, pursuant to statutory timelines outlined in the State Facilities Closure Act, 30 ILCS 608/5-1 *et seq.*, DHS will not be taking action to implement the recommendation for closure of the Tinley Park MHC until October 29, 2011.

Tinley Park MHC is located in Tinley Park, Illinois. It is one of nine (9) State-operated psychiatric hospitals (Hospitals) operated by DHS' Division of Mental Health. Each hospital is responsible for the inpatient service needs of residents within a distinct geographic region, or catchment area; the region in which Tinley Park MHC is located is known as Metro South or Southland.

In 2004, the previous administration of DHS convened a task force to create a vision for the mental health delivery system for the Metro South region. In 2005, the task force recommended that Tinley Park MHC be closed and that a new hospital be built in the Metro South region. In 2008, after receiving the approval of the Governor's Office, DHS notified CGFA of its plans. In May 2009, CGFA issued its advisory opinion approving the proposed closure of Tinley Park MHC.

Since that time, DHS' budget has been reduced significantly. The appropriations bill passed by the General Assembly on May 30, 2011 (HB 3717) reduced DHS' budget even further. With respect to Tinley Park MHC, the General Assembly halved the appropriation (50%), providing only enough funds to permit Tinley Park MHC to operate until

early December 2011.

It was under this backdrop that DHS was forced to make some very difficult decisions. After much discussion, we determined that the only way to manage the budget as it stands is to restructure the entire Hospital system. As outlined in the recommendations we have filed with CGFA to date, the restructuring necessitates not only the closure of at least three Hospitals (Tinley Park MHC, Chester Mental Health Center in Chester, Illinois, and Singer Mental Health Center in Rockford, Illinois), but a shift in the type of care we provide. Specifically, the Division of Mental Health will be limited in the number of acute care patients it treats, while focusing on the care of forensic patients (as required by statute), and extended care, treatment refractory patients. This rebalancing of the patient population in the remaining Hospitals will also result in the need to change not only the functions of the remaining Hospitals, *e.g.*, from acute care to forensic treatment, but will also necessitate the increased involvement of community providers who can step in to care for the acutely ill psychiatric patients who will no longer be served by the Hospitals.

The closure of Tinley Park MHC is necessitated by the FY 2012 budget, and is not analogous to the 2008-2009 closure effort. This closure is the result of a lack of appropriation in the budget, and we must close on an accelerated timeline and without another hospital in Metro South. In addition to Chester MHC, Singer MHC and Tinley Park MHC, another result of the budget deficit, as a matter of both operations and payroll, is DHS' lack of funds to follow through on the construction and operation of another hospital in the region.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,



Michelle R.B. Saddler
Secretary

Very truly yours,



Lorrie Rickman Jones, Ph.D.
Director, Division of Mental Health