



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

September 16, 2011

VIA HAND DELIVERY AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg, Co-Chair
Representative Patti Bellock, Co-Chair
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706



Re: Closure of H. Douglas Singer Mental Health Center

Dear Senator Schoenberg and Representative Bellock:

On behalf of the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS), and in connection with the proposed closure of the Singer Mental Health Center, the following are DHS' recommendations and its response to the ten questions which are required to be answered pursuant to Section 5-10 of the State Facilities Closure Act, 30 ILCS 608/5-10.

Recommendation:

On May 30, 2011 the General Assembly passed an appropriations bill (HB 3717) for the operations of the nine (9) State-Operated Mental Health Centers (Mental Health Centers (MHC) or Hospitals) operated by DHS' Division of Mental Health. The legislation provided \$194.9 million against the Governor's requested budget of \$253.7 million for the nine (9) Hospitals.

DHS and the Division of Mental Health have spent considerable time and energy in an effort to determine a way that we can continue to provide the level of services which we have historically delivered and which we are statutorily mandated to deliver while doing so within the parameters of the appropriations as received. Regrettably, and after much reflection, we have determined that the closure of the H. Douglas Singer Mental Health Center (Singer MHC) is the only course of action which will satisfy our fiduciary, statutory and clinical obligations. This action will result in the change in the mission of the Division of Mental Health from providing a wide range of psychiatric services, including acute inpatient psychiatric care, to providing predominantly forensically-mandated services with limited options for treating civil acute care and extended care patients.

Therefore, in FY12, the Division of Mental Health will close Singer MHC's seventy-six (76) beds.

Responses:

1. The location and identity of the State facility proposed to be closed:

H. Douglas Singer Mental Health Center
4402 North Main Street, Rockford, Illinois 61103-1278

2. The number of employees for which the State facility is the primary stationary work location and the effect of the closure of the facility on those employees:

There are 151 employees at Singer MHC. Until the closure agreement is negotiated, we will not know the impact on the employees at Singer Mental Health Center.

3. The location or locations to which the functions and employees of the State facility would be moved:

- The State's capacity to provide acute inpatient psychiatric care will be significantly reduced. The broader mental health system, specifically private community-based hospitals and mental health providers, would be expected to provide much more of this service to the population currently served in the State psychiatric Hospitals.
- Alton Mental Health Center (Alton) in Alton, Illinois, will be expanding its responsibility for the treatment of extended care patients.
- Chicago Read Mental Health Center (Chicago Read) in Chicago, Illinois, will be expanding its responsibility for the treatment of extended care patients.
- Elgin Mental Health Center (Elgin) in Elgin, Illinois, will be expanding its responsibility for the treatment of extended care patients.
- McFarland Mental Health Center (McFarland) in Springfield, Illinois, will be expanding its responsibility for the treatment of extended care patients by opening one fifteen (15) bed civil unit.

4. The availability and condition of land and facilities at both the existing location and any potential locations:

Singer Mental Health Center consists of seven (7) buildings (Hawthorne, Locust, Birchwood, Community, Willow, Sycamore and Linden), all connected by an enclosed walkway and a stand-alone garage with a cooling tower:

- Hawthorne is used for administration
- Locust houses engineering, dietary and stores
- Birchwood and Community are used for staff support and patient therapy
- Sycamore and Linden are living units for individuals with mental illness
- Willow is vacant

Upon closure, DHS would vacate these buildings and deem them excess property.

5. The ability to accommodate the functions and employees at the existing and at any potential locations:

- The State's capacity to provide civil acute inpatient psychiatric care will be significantly reduced, affecting approximately 845 civil admissions annually.
- Alton MHC, with moderate security upgrades (capital improvements), will be converted to the Maximum Security Forensic Hospital. Staff training will occur to prepare staff on new policies, procedures and clinical management techniques needed to provide maximum security forensic services.
- Chicago Read MHC will be expanding its responsibility for treatment-refractory, extended care patients.
- McFarland MHC will be expanding its responsibility for treatment-refractory, extended care patients by opening one fifteen (15) bed civil unit.
- Alton MHC will convert one civil unit (fifteen (15) beds) for treatment-refractory, extended care patients.
- Elgin MHC will convert one civil unit (twenty-five (25) beds) for treatment-refractory, extended care patients.

6. The cost of operations of the State facility and at any potential locations and any other related budgetary impacts:

Based on actual FY11 spending, the annual cost of operating Singer MHC was \$13.6 million.

Given the cost of closing this Hospital and the minimal reinvestment in community services, a deficit of \$37.9 million will remain in the FY12 budget. Therefore, DHS will have to address this deficit with corresponding cuts of \$37.9 million throughout the rest of DHS' budget. This deficit does not include capital improvements.¹

Under the proposal to close Singer MHC, DHS will provide minimal funding to serve persons in community-based settings. Federal disproportionate share funding allocated to the State for the provision of services to the uninsured population in State Hospitals may be reduced. The exact amount of this reduction has yet to be determined.

7. The economic impact on existing communities in the vicinity of the State facility and any potential facilities:

A report commissioned from and prepared by the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana will be forwarded to you under separate cover.

¹ This deficit figure is based on the assumption that Tinley Park, Chester and Singer Mental Health Centers all close in FY12 per the Notices of Intent submitted to CGFA on September 8, 2011.

8. The ability of the existing and any potential community's infrastructure to support the functions and employees:

- The plans and recommendations as discussed represent significant increases in the level of acute inpatient psychiatric services that will become the responsibility of the community-based medical and mental health providers. The current capacity and ability of the private sector to serve this population is not fully known at this time. The State will need to engage with private hospitals to build capacity to provide this care to approximately 845 admissions annually. In addition, community-based mental health and substance abuse providers would also need to build capacity to enhance alternatives to inpatient care. There would be additional costs to the State for assuring the availability of these services.
- State functions will be re-allocated as follows:
 - Pending statutory changes, Alton MHC would become the Maximum Security Forensic Hospital, assuming the responsibility now provided by Chester MHC. One acute civil unit at Alton (fifteen (15) beds) will be converted to an extended care unit.
 - Chicago Read MHC's responsibility for treatment-refractory, extended care patients will be expanded.
 - McFarland MHC's responsibility for treatment-refractory, extended care patients will be expanded.
 - One civil unit (twenty-five (25) beds) at Elgin MHC will be converted for treatment-refractory, extended care patients.

9. The impact on State services delivered at the existing location, in direct relation to the State services expected to be delivered at any potential locations:

- All State services at Singer Mental Health Center will cease operation during FY12.
- Alton MHC, Chicago Read MHC, Elgin MHC and McFarland MHC will assume responsibility for handling extended care or selective treatment-refractory patients currently in the system with selective new admissions.
- Pending statutory changes, Alton MHC would become the Maximum Security Forensic Hospital with the acute, civil unit (fifteen (15) beds) converting to a treatment-refractory extended care unit.

10. The environmental impact, including the impact of costs related to potential environmental restoration, waste management, and environmental compliance activities:

There are no underground storage tanks at this location. Asbestos is present throughout the Hospital; specifically, in floor tile and mastic in 9x9 floor tile. Several of the pipe runs have asbestos-containing material on the elbow joints.

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

Very truly yours,



Michelle R.B. Saddler
Secretary

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