FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority
Report of Findings
HRA #11-100-9008
Elgin Mental Health Center

In November 2010, the North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority (HRA) opened this investigation regarding Elgin Mental Health Center, Forensic Treatment Program, Unit L. A complaint was received that alleged that recipients are not receiving suitable therapeutic discharge services. If found substantiated, the allegation would be a violation of the Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (405 ILCS 5/2-102).

Recipients receiving services at EMHC's Forensic Treatment Program have been remanded by Illinois County Courts to the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) under statutes finding them Unfit to Stand Trial (UST) and Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI). Placement evaluations determine the most appropriate inpatient or outpatient setting for forensic treatment based on a number of factors including age, gender, mental health diagnosis, and security need. Unless a person is specifically ordered to receive services in an outpatient setting, court ordered referrals under state forensic statutes call for placement in a secure inpatient setting. The Forensic Treatment Program has 315 beds.

To pursue this investigation, a site visit was conducted in November 2010, at which time the allegation was discussed with the unit's Nurse Manager, the Director of Rehabilitation Services and a recipient of service.

Findings

In interviewing a recipient of services, it was stated that recipients are not receiving suitable therapeutic discharge services in that the facility has been without someone to teach computer classes for the past two years. The recipient stated that not only are recipients interested in being trained in computers, but it is essential to have this knowledge post discharge since applying for most jobs require that the applicant complete an on-line employment application.

The Forensic Treatment Program has a Program Services Department that contains (among other services) a library, educational classrooms, computers, an area to listen to electronic devices and a Craft and Horticulture/Flower Shop program. The Director of this program stated that they have been without a computer trainer and a food-service trainer for the past two years. She acknowledged that computer skills are very important skills to have post discharge and that she very much would like an employee in this position, but budget constraints simply have not allowed for either position to be filled. When discussed if it would be possible to have a volunteer teach classes, it was stated that all volunteers must be accompanied by a staff member at all times, thus the reason why a volunteer has not been considered. It was also pointed-out that the Craft Production Program and the Horticulture Program are grant funded programs.

A review of Unit L's daily/weekly schedule shows that each unit activity/therapy could be considered suitable discharge services (hygiene education, health education, mental health education, cognitive rehabilitation, relapse prevention, etc.)

The Center's Interdisciplinary Treatment Planning policy states that, "Appropriate, individualized treatment services shall be provided to each patient. In addition, educational services shall be provided to all patients, and, when appropriate to the patients', families and/or significant others." The policy does not specify what these services might entail.

Conclusion

Pursuant to the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, Section 2-102, "a recipient of services shall be provided with adequate and humane care and services in the least restrictive environment…"

The HRA concludes that the unit activity/therapies could be considered as "suitable" discharge therapies; the allegation is not substantiated. Nevertheless, the HRA concurs with the premise that one does need some computer skills to function in today's society. Although the HRA is not naive to the state budget constraints, it is hoped that when the budget allows for additional employees, that programming positions are considered a priority.

RESPONSE

Notice: The following page(s) contain the provider response. Due to technical requirements, some provider responses appear verbatim in retyped format.

Pat Quinn, *Governor*

Michelle R.B.Saddler., *Secretary*

Division of Mental Health - Region 2
Elgin Mental Health Center — Singer Mental Health Center

RECOVERY IS OUR VISION
Recovery is a Personal Journey of Hope, Healing, Growth, Choice, and Change

March 3, 2011

Mr. Dan Haligas - Chairperson
North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority
9511 Harrison Street, W-300
Des Plaines, IL 60016-1565

Re: HRA #11-100-9008

Dear Mr. Haligas,

Thank you for your recent letter. Staff at Elgin Mental Health Center pride themselves on offering a wide variety of therapeutic activities to our patients. We do put a high priority on our computer education program and will continue to advocate for our Educator position to be filled as soon as our budget allows.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Brock

Paul Brock, M.P.A., M.H.A.
Hospital Administrator

PB/JF/aw

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