

Update on Closure of Dorothea Dix Hospital

Comments to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on HHS March 13, 2012

Introductory Remarks – History *(Luckey Welsh, Director, DSOHF)*

- Pursuant to G.S. 122C-181(b) and 122C-112.1(b)(30) the Plan for the Closure of Dorothea Dix Hospital was filed Nov. 4, 2010 to:
 - Joint LOC Co-Chairs
 - Senate Appropriations Committee on HHS Co-Chairs
 - House Appropriations Subcommittee on HHS Co-Chairs
- Bills in House and Senate entitled “An Act to Disapprove the Closure of Dorothea Dix Hospital” were introduced.
- DHHS plans to relocate the remaining patients on the Dix Campus, (30 F-Min) and officially close DDH. This will improve the quality and safety for patients and reduce operating costs.
- Provide an update/status on the plan for the closure of Dorothea Dix Hospital. DHHS will resubmit the plan together with an updated schedule to the following:
 - Joint LOC on HHS Co-Chairs
 - Senate Appropriations Committee on HHS Co-Chairs
 - House Appropriations Subcommittee on HHS Co-Chairs
- DHHS intends to seek approval for the closing from the Council of State
- Today will serve as notification to this Committee of our intent to proceed with the closure of DDH.
- An overview of the steps that will be taken to transition 30 patients to Butner.

Closure Action Plan *(Laura White, Team Leader for State Hospitals, DSOHF)*

- Patients: Current inpatient population on Dix Campus is 30 individuals in the Forensic Minimum Security Unit. Care has been taken to develop a plan that ensures comparable care and treatment for patients after they are transferred to Butner, including:
 - Treatment: Patients will benefit from a more robust offering of treatment, skill acquisition, education groups by participating in the full psychosocial program at CRH.
 - Employment: Nearly all individuals on F-Min participate in work activities approved by the Court. Most participate in facility-based activities such as landscape services, janitorial services, and clerical. These types of work opportunities will also be available in Butner. A small number, typically 4-5 individuals, hold jobs in the community, again with Court

ordered privileges. Similar employment opportunities will be available in Butner and Creedmoor. CRH employment staff members are beginning to cultivate job opportunities now in preparation for the transfer.

- Social Opportunities: Patients on the F-Min Unit will be able to take advantage of cultural, leisure, spiritual and educational opportunities in the Butner/Creedmoor/Durham/Chapel Hill region as allowed by Court granted privileges and directed by their treatment plan.
- Legal: Necessary steps have been identified to ensure that notification is made to those involved with each patient's legal case, including:
 - Patient's defense attorneys
 - Attorney General's Office
 - District Attorney of each involved county
 - Submit revisions of patient court orders, if indicated, for judicial approval prior to the move
 - Wake County Superior Court and other courts of jurisdiction
 - Granville County Superior Court
- Staff:
 - Staff currently working in the F-Min Unit will be given the opportunity to transfer with the patients to Butner. Human Resources will work closely with Department Heads to ensure adequate recruiting for vacant positions.
 - Nursing, professional and other staff will complete necessary orientation and training prior to beginning their duties on the Butner campus.
- Physical Plant:
 - F-Min will be located on the campus of the former John Umstead Hospital, now called the CRH Annex. The space was recently occupied by R.J. Blackley Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Center will require only minor refurbishing such as painting.
 - Some enhancement of the infrastructure for IT and communications will be required.
 - The total estimated cost for the physical plant, including IT enhancements, is \$20,000.
- Conclusion: Once all required approvals are obtained, DHHS plans to complete the closure of Dorothea Dix Hospital in the summer of 2012. The relocation of the patients on the F-Min Unit to Butner will provide enhanced treatment and employment opportunities as they will be integrated into the larger hospital infrastructure. The closer proximity to the other forensic units and the larger hospital will also enhance management and oversight of the unit.