

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Friday, June 06, 2014 2:37:52 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 2:33 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Friday, June 6, 2014 - 14:33

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Carol

Last Name: Cook

Title: Parent/Guardian

Organization you are affiliated with: Family Member's/Guardians of residents at the ASSLC

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed:

Issue 1--I am opposed of closing the ASSLC and 5 of the others due to declining health, emotional and mental anxiety it will bring to the many residents who have lived their most of their lives. As well as not having adequate support services in the community for complex medical and behavioral issues that the SSLC can provide. The great love and care my son receives each and every day as well as all who live there have been ignored due to the negative press, pressure from DADS and the large advocacy groups for community living who worry more about money DADS is spending and how that money could be given to them who don't really care about our loved ones and what their needs are. I recommend that the SSLC's remain open and restructuring DAD's back into two deparments with each one having their own director. Currently DADS has oversight over too many programs so the support to the SSLS's and especially Austin SSLC does not exist. For years DADS has had great qualified staff and more importantly people who really want to work with this population. They have been so overworked and pressured to where they have had to leave or have been fired due to results from surveys whether it was founded or not, or to the work conditions and lack of support they have to deal with every day.

Issue 2---If it comes to the the ASSLC being closed I support the need for better and extra support services to be developed in the community for people with higher behavioral and medical need's. I recommend expanding crisis intervention teams to provide increased support to people with IDD, medically fragile and behaviorallly challenged for their quality of life to remain the same as life at the ASSLC. One of the elements that the SSLC's provided was intermediate medical care for people who could be treated in a specialized treatment clinic for non life threatening conditions inseed of the emergency room or hospital. Where the nurses, doctors and staff do not have the expericenc or knowledge of how to deal with this special population. My son does not do well in the emergency room or hospital. He has to be drugged and restrained in order to provide medical care for him. It has only been a few times where he actually needed to be hospitalized for a few days and is always a horrible experience. If I had

not had support from ASSLC staff it would have been even more difficult. But most of the time he could be cared for in the on campus infirmary at the ASSLC where he received 24 hour nursing and staff support. There also needs to be tighter regulations put into place to ensure that adequate support services are mandated to be provided in the community by the state or that the businesses who own these group homes are mandated to provide them. Right now because community living has become a big money making business, my experience from my son living in a group is that they can basically decide how they want to spend their money as long as they provide them basic mental, physical and health services and no regulations in place to oversee what services they do provide and how they can provide the services they want to and spend their money however they want to as well. .

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

As I am sure you are aware, a week after the Sunset Commission's report DADS sent letters to 50 families letting them know that they are downsizing the ASSLC and will be closing 4 homes. My son's home will be one of them and I have until Nov. 1, 2014 to either move him to another ASSLC or a community group home. My son is one of those who is medically fragile and behaviorally challenged even though high level in a lot of ways. The ASSLC is the only place that I have found that can provide for all his needs.

There is an urgent need that these support services be put into place ASAP as well as the regulations to back it up. If that is not possible I recommend that there is a stop to ASSLC downsizing until adequate services and regulations can be established.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree