

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Dawn Roberson](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 01, 2014 7:46:58 AM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]  
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2014 6:08 PM  
To: Sunset Advisory Commission  
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Monday, June 30, 2014 - 18:07

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Mary J

Last Name: Williams

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

City: Katy

State: Texas

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

Issue 1 – I support the Closure/Consolidation of residents living in the SSLC's. There are too few people being admitted and there are too many waiting for community supports. I ask the Sunset committee - would you be OK living in these places when you become elderly or end up with a disability - probably not. I was appalled that one of the discussions at the hearing was about possible asbestos and/or other issues in the buildings and possible need for remediation (cost) and a possible reason not to close a facility or put it up for sale – but it's OK to let a person with a disability currently live there? That is wrong. I know that many families who have older adults with disabilities were not given any other option when they placed their loved ones in the SSLC; but it is different for families today.

Children are educated and included in their school & home communities. My husband and I (as well as many other families) have supported our children in our home (at no cost to the state – except for education funding) for years rather than place him at a SSLC. Now my 24 year old son receives a Medicaid waiver (after waiting 11 years) that allows him to access the community with one attendant– but there also is a community of people that know him and watch out for him when he is at the library, grocery shopping, exercising, etc. His Medicaid budget is 1/5 of the budget of an individual living in the SSLC, yet his quality of life is excellent. Our dream is for him to live as independently as possible – possibly in his own apartment with supports one day.

I know that last year almost 50% of the admissions of youth (under age 21) to SSLCs were to Mexia and San Angelo as a result of supposed offender status.

Is this the result of the “school to prison” pipeline or do we need to maintain a separate facility for offenders with IDD? Currently we see on the news regularly that the prison system is the warehouse for those with psychiatric/mental health conditions. We need to ensure that those with intense behavioral support needs have access to those supports in our communities (See issue #2). It is very difficult for many families to find respite,

intense behavioral support needs, or emergency support in a crisis situation. If the SSLC services are so wonderful – then possibly allowing families/individuals access to such high quality support on an outpatient, fee for service basis may be beneficial for all if you are planning to repurpose these facilities. Individuals with disabilities need to have most of their needs met in their home communities where they have lived, worked, worshiped and built relationships. We need to ensure that they money follows persons as they leave the facilities also so that they do not lose their needed supports (medical/behavioral/etc.).

Issue 2 – I support adding a reimbursement level for persons with high medical needs, AS WELL AS intense Behavioral needs. The state also desperately needs some crisis intervention services in ALL counties of the state for those with dual diagnosis. Currently in Harris County - we have that a program for those with Dual Diagnosis (IDD/MH), but for families desperate for support for their loved ones just outside the county line - they are out of luck....and then their only option is the SSLC....which for many is not an option. For many families that have individuals with high behavioral needs - there are not enough group homes and/or day programs that take these individuals.

Issue 3 –Parents have a difficult time finding quality day programs for their loved ones and regularly go out and look at facilities before deciding where to place their loved ones. If you can afford private pay – there are some excellent quality programs available. Some of those facilities will work with a family to provide respite or other service through a Medicaid waiver but usually the individual must be using the consumer directed service option. “Sending clients to a day habilitation facility is not a requirement of any DADS program, but allows people with IDD to work on socialization skills and become more independent.....day habilitation facilities are not licensed by any federal, state, or local government entity”. Before we began Consumer Directed services option – we were told that our son had to be out of the home for 6 hours per day in the community – thankfully he was in his next to last year of school. Perhaps a re-education of the providers is needed? Why is day habilitation being used by providers if they are responsible for the safety and well being of their clients? Is the real reason for day hab. for individuals with disabilities because it cut's the cost of keeping staff in a group home???

You get what you pay for. I have yet to find a "day program" that would keep my son safe, provide socialization or independent living skills for \$24/day - that is in essence \$4/hour for a 6 hour day habilitation site. I do not think the rates have been adjusted much over the years – perhaps the rates need to be adjusted to provide more quality care and in doing so programs would improve (or providers would provide their own quality program). DADS needs to get out and monitor these facilities providing Day Hab. - either through their local authorities (who currently go out and do home visits) or requiring the providers that place persons there to do the same.

In addition I agree that some minimum standards (especially in regard to background checks) for all programs providing day habilitation needs to be implemented, as well as some method to report on the quality of the programs on the website.

Issue 4 – I agree that long term care providers need to face enforcement for their actions. This also needs to be public knowledge on the website on which agencies have faced sanctions so that the public is informed. This report was my first knowledge regarding financial sanctions to providers...I did not see this easily on the Quality reporting section of the website.

Issue 6 - See note above regarding this - The website is OK, but not the best. If you don't click on the right thing, you don't get the full information to make informed decisions. It is not easy to find information on the website.

The state of Texas needs to ensure the most vulnerable populations (elderly and persons with disabilities) are adequately cared for - The fact that we spend millions on less than 3500 residents doesn't make financial sense for the thousands of other persons with disabilities and elderly who are going without adequate care because they choose to stay in the community.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: None noted - see above.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree