

**Testimony on the
Transformation of Pennsylvania Forensic Services**

Joan Erney, J.D., Deputy Secretary, Office of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services

**House Labor Relations and Judiciary Committees
October 25, 2007**



Pennsylvania's per diem averages \$713 a day. According to a report from the National Association of State Mental Health Directors, the national average is \$388 a day. Given the disparity between what Pennsylvania is spending compared to the rest of the nation, and in order to be good stewards of the Commonwealth's money, it was necessary to find ways to control costs, bring our costs in line and maintain the level of quality services that are necessary to operate the facilities. In order to do that, OMHSAS released a Request for Proposal to develop two psychiatric inpatient forensic centers with capability for community residential step down and transitional treatment team services. This initiative would provide for regional access to state-of-the-art evaluation and treatment resources and more fully integrate the complex criminal justice and behavioral health components necessary to successfully reintegrate this population.

In order to achieve taxpayer savings and ensure quality the RFP makes it possible for a vendor to do the follow:

- Provide for the joint administration of two sites, licensed as psychiatric inpatient facilities with capability to offer co-occurring treatment and intervention for up to 220 individuals on the grounds of two state hospitals: Torrance State Hospital in Torrance, in Westmoreland County in the western part of the state and; Norristown State Hospital in Montgomery County in the Southeastern region.
- Ensure a treatment approach that promotes opportunities for community reintegration by the development of two specialized residential treatment units for step down and community transition.

- Provide for two specialized Community Treatment Teams to support aftercare and integration with Community Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol and local judicial systems.

The Request for Proposals (RFP) was released on August 16, 2007. Bids are due on October 31, 2007. A website with additional information, including the RFP can be found on the Department of General Services Website. Thank you.

Forensic Services Privatization Fact Sheet
August 31, 2007

The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) is soliciting proposals for evaluation that could enable us to improve the delivery of our services and/or potentially save the Commonwealth a significant amount of money by reviewing options to privatize forensic services.

The forensic centers currently serve approximately 217 patients at three locations -- Warren, Norristown and Mayview State Hospitals. These forensic centers serve county governments across the commonwealth at no cost to the county by:

- Evaluating and treating inmates from county jails who are in need of evaluation and treatment as they await trial or sentencing, or
- Serving individuals charged with a crime who have been determined to be incompetent to stand trial (IST), or
- Serving individuals who have been determined not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI), or
- Serving individuals who are serving a county sentence and meet the criteria for inpatient treatment. Sentences of two years or less are typically served in county jails.

Demographic Data	FY- 04/05	FY- 05/06
Admissions	524	509
Discharges	507	508

Admissions to forensic centers come from:

- County jails
- State Correctional Institution (SCI) at Muncy (3 female beds- No state sentenced men are admitted to forensic centers)

Forensic Average Length of Stay	Mayview	Norristown	Warren
FY- 04/05	74	117	67
FY- 05/06	76	137	112

Discharges from forensic centers:

- To county jails in order to proceed with criminal process.
- Directly to community (example: charges are dropped and the person returns home).
- To civil commitment (example: charges dropped or time served and still in need of inpatient treatment).

Forensic Centers' Expenditures (excluding indirect costs)	Fiscal Year 05/06
Mayview	\$13,437,085
Warren	\$6,280,446
Norristown	\$24,903,177
Total	\$44,620,708

Forensic Services Privatization Fact Sheet
August 31, 2007

Other states have been successful in privatizing forensic services. Many states across the country have explored and been successful in privatizing portions or all of their forensic services. While Florida has fully privatized one of its forensic hospitals, numerous other states such as Alabama, Indiana, Maine, Montana, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin have privatized various components of their forensic services.

Timeline:

- Original RFP issued August 16, 2007.
- Questions on the RFP/public comment must be submitted by August 31, 2007
- Pre-proposal conference with potential bidders – September 20, 2007
- Answers to potential bidder questions – September 28, 2007
- Deadline for proposals submission – October 31, 2007