

**Senator McGuire Meeting at Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC)
Questions & Answers from
December 19, 2015**

Agenda Item # 3: Department response to questions related to transformation vs. closure:

- a. Why isn't "transformation", including housing, veteran services, or a placement of last resort on SDC's footprint, being considered by the Department during the closure process?**

The Department is considering the future use of the SDC property during the closure process. Our first priority is to identify the types of services for individuals with developmental disabilities that will not be available through community services, assess the level of need for those services, and determine the feasibility of providing those services in the SDC location.

There are many challenges and considerations involved with developing potential future services on-site, which were identified in the proposed closure plan. They include, among others:

- The ability to support and sustain services through partnerships and funding streams, including federal funding considerations.
- New federal rules affecting where and how home and community-based services (HCBS) are delivered in order to qualify for federal funding under the federal Medicaid program.
- SDC's remote location and aging infrastructure which are significant challenges to establishing homes and services on-site, and require detailed assessments and analyses.

DDS will continue to work with SDC families, the larger Sonoma community, and DGS to explore future services that could and should be provided at SDC.

- b. How will the community continue to have a say in what happens at the SDC site?**

The Department continues to have conversations with interested stakeholders, including families, environmental interests and the county. The Department remains reachable by phone, email, or in-person. As closure progresses, the Department will coordinate outreach and further communication on property-related issues with DGS, families and the local community.

Agenda Item # 4: Department response to questions related to long term care and safety of residents

a. What is the Department currently doing to prepare services within the community to ensure that SDC residents thrive?

The Department currently serves over 290,000 individuals in the community, including many individuals with similar conditions and acuity levels as the residents of SDC. The Department, regional centers and community service providers are all dedicated to ensuring that SDC residents thrive once they transition to the community. As our system has transitioned to providing more services in the community, new models of care to address specialized needs have been developed, successfully implemented and will continue to be options for the individuals moving from SDC. The initiatives and accomplishments of developmental center closures over the last ten years will provide important service alternatives for SDC residents.

b. How will the Department ensure that SDC clients are doing well within the community?

Through the transition process and once a placement has occurred, regular monitoring and follow-up activities are conducted by the regional center, the Sonoma Regional Project, and various other State entities. Close monitoring enables early identification of any issues and timely intervention. As needed, additional resources will be arranged to support the individual in their new home. Some examples of the monitoring that occurs after a person moves to the community are:

- At a minimum, State personnel provide follow-up at 5 days, 30 days, 90 days, 6 months, and 12 months after the move. Additional State personnel visits, supports and on-site training are coordinated with the regional center, based on each individual's needs.

- The regional center conducts face-to-face visits every 30 days for the first 90 days after the move and as determined by the Individual Program Plan thereafter.
- During the two years following transition, individuals receive enhanced regional center case management, which includes additional visits, supports, and onsite training as needed.
- Each individual has an individual health care plan that identifies his or her primary care physician, dentist, and all other specialty health care providers.
- Medically fragile consumers transitioning from SDC to CDSS-licensed homes for adults with special health care needs will be visited by a registered nurse at least monthly, or more frequently as appropriate. At least four of these visits are unannounced. In addition, these individuals will be seen by a physician at least every 60 days or more frequently if specified in the individual health care plan.
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- Following the initial placement period, regional center personnel visit all individuals, including former SDC residents, residing in community care facilities and intermediate care facilities four times annually; and conduct at least two unannounced visits.
- DDS conducts daily reviews of Special Incident Reports to provide oversight to ensure consumer health and safety and to identify potential trends in incidents and, if necessary, offer technical assistance to the regional center(s).

The Department has a contract for an independent monitor with proven capabilities in quality assurance. The independent monitor is responsible for the development and implementation of a monitoring plan that includes specialized monitoring of the transition process and outcomes.

c. How will the Department ensure that services in the community are equipped for these advanced clients?

The Department recognizes that community capacity must be developed and available to meet the full range of service and support needs when individuals transition from SDC, including residential, day, work, health, dental, behavioral, specialty equipment, psychiatric and other services.

The regional centers involved with the closure of SDC are identifying each individual's needs utilizing comprehensive assessments and the person-

centered planning process, analyzing the existing community capacity to meet those specialized needs, and developing new services and options through their Community Placement Plan when unmet needs are identified. As more is known and closure progresses, adjustments will be made to resource development efforts, so that services and supports are available to meet the needs of each individual.

The critical method for ensuring services are appropriate and available for each individual as they transition, is transition planning, which is now part of the Individual Program Plan development process at SDC. It is through this individualized, Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) process, which includes the participation of key persons in the resident's life, that the individual's needs are fully assessed, and that the appropriate services and supports are carefully identified, arranged and coordinated to coincide with the individual's move. Residents will not move from SDC until the services and supports identified in the Individual Program Plan are coordinated and available when the individual moves into his or her new home. Once the person moves, the quality and appropriateness of the services will be determined through ongoing monitoring, oversight and quality management functions.

d. How will the Department ensure there isn't a delay in services within the community?

The process of closing a developmental center occurs one person at a time. Only when services are available in the community will a person move. If there are delays in the services that a particular person needs, then his or her move will be delayed or modified as determined appropriate by the ID Team.

e. What is the contingency plan for those who fail in the community?

If a placement is not successful, further assessment under Welfare and Institutions Code section 4418.7 will be initiated, including consideration of alternative resources through the statewide specialized resource service. When an individual experiences challenges that cannot be resolved in a community setting, and while SDC is open and an individual's legal status permits, prior residents of SDC may return to SDC from the community for a period of up to one year from their placement date.

The Department is working with the regional centers to ensure that all necessary services are available to properly support every individual we serve in the community. The Department also has broad authority to supplement community alternatives for the purpose of achieving a successful transition by providing services and using developmental center employees to provide services under Welfare and Institutions Code section 4474.2.

f. Where will SDC's residents go? Will they have a say on staying local?

Where an individual will live is determined by their ID Team through the person-centered planning process. Families and/or their representatives are an important part of the ID Team, as well as the regional center. The ID Team carefully identifies the individual's needs, interests and preferences and the services and supports that will meet them, and then formalizes the ID Team decisions in the Individual Program Plan.

It is through this individualized process that the future location of the residential services will be identified, as well as the type of home that is needed. This process emphasizes the importance of keeping family together in their desired area, and allows for the transfer of the individual's case management from one regional center to another, when the location of the residence is in another regional center's catchment area.

g. How will the Department track outcomes for SDC residents?

Drawing from the statewide DDS Quality Management System (QMS) and the regional center quality assurance processes that are currently in place, an active SDC QMS is in development and will be maintained by the Department (in conjunction with the regional centers) to monitor consumers' quality outcomes and satisfaction, and identify areas that may need improvement. The QMS strategy for the SDC closure is to build upon the existing DDS and regional center quality assurance systems. The focus of this strategy will be on assuring that quality services and supports are available prior to, during, and after transition of each person leaving SDC.

Specifically, the SDC QMS will include the development, implementation, and monitoring of service provider performance expectations, individual outcomes, and systemic outcomes and process measures including:

- The development and monitoring of an individual health transition plan for every SDC resident

- Enhanced monitoring by regional center clinicians when identified in the Individual Program Plan
- An additional year of enhanced regional center case management at a 1:45 caseload ratio
- Establishment of a Quality Management Advisory Group (QMAG) specific to SDC
- An annual family and consumer satisfaction survey through the National Core Indicators (NCI) project for all individuals transitioning from SDC and their families
- On-site visits and interviews
- Review of Individual Program Plans
- Semi-Annual Risk Management Reporting by the DDS risk management contractor that will include:
 - Reportable Incidents – The number and rate of reportable incidents among people moving from SDC will be captured and reported using Special Incident Reports.
 - Changes in residential settings
 - Changes in skills of daily living, challenging behaviors and personal outcomes

Agenda Item # 5: Department response to questions related to the staff team at the Sonoma Developmental Center

a. What will happen with the police and fire services currently available at SDC?

The police and fire services at SDC will continue to be available while SDC is open and after closure, until the disposition of the property is determined. The Department will continue to fill vacant police and fire positions while services are needed. If the Department is unable to attract a sufficient number of qualified candidates in the future, it may become necessary to maintain the services through contract(s).

b. What is the step-by-step process for an SDC staff member to setup a community home?

The process for setting up a community home varies by each regional center. SDC employees who are interested in starting community homes or programs to serve individuals leaving SDC should talk with the regional

center responsible for the area where they want to develop their program. The Sonoma Regional Project and/or the Department can help connect them with the correct contact person at each regional center. Additionally, North Bay Regional Center and the Sonoma Regional Project have already hosted one meeting to assist employees interested in starting a home or program near SDC, and future meetings will be scheduled, as needed. As the Career Center comes on line, more opportunities to provide employees with information and assistance will be identified.

c. How will the Department ensure that staff stay through the closure process?

Employee retention during the closure and transition process is, and will remain, a high priority to assure continuity of services. The Department is working with the California Department of Human Resources on finding methods to retain employees and to encourage the transfer of level-of-care staff to other developmental centers.

Employees have suggested, and the Department is exploring, the possibility of retention bonuses, state service credit opportunities, and the ability to guarantee positions or specialized training for employees that stay through the end of closure. These types of employee benefits require legislative authorization and funding, and are subject to collective bargaining.

d. How will the Department ensure that staff have other jobs within the system?

The Department is committed to the implementation of employee supports that will promote workforce stability and provide opportunities for employees to determine their future. To this end, the Department will:

- Provide employees with current and accurate information;
- Encourage them to seek new opportunities to serve individuals with developmental disabilities;
- Pursue ways or incentives to retain them in our system
- Support them by offering assistance to further their personal goals; and
- Provide opportunities to enhance their job skills.

The Department plans to convene a Staff Support Advisory Group for SDC in January to ensure the continuity of staffing and that activities undertaken

to assist employees in developing personal plans for their futures are meeting their needs, including providing opportunities within our system.

A Career Center is being established at SDC to provide personal support for each employee, assist them as needed in identifying their future interests, and equip them with the knowledge to achieve their goals. The Center will be a central point of information, education and services for employees to determine and pursue future job opportunities, consider retirement and benefit options, and understand the State layoff process and how it may affect them. The career center will be available for employees in January 2016 and officially opening on February 14, 2016.

The Department will also implement what is referred to as a Department Restriction of Appointments process, which will provide SDC employees with priority hiring status for advertised departmental vacancies statewide.

Additionally, the Department is actively supporting and encouraging SDC employees to utilize the Community State Staff Program (CSSP) to transition with SDC residents into community residential, work, and day program settings so that SDC residents can continue to benefit from familiar and knowledgeable staff. DDS is also working with regional centers and providers involved with SDC to raise awareness of the benefits of the CSSP.

e. And we still don't have outcome data for the SDC residents who have already left- how many end up in jail? Homeless? Die?

The Department provided non-identifying consumer data in response to an August 2015 request that included the following information regarding 164 individuals who were placed into the community from SDC from January 2011 through July 2015:

- 0 people were incarcerated
- 0 people found themselves homeless, had unknown whereabouts, or were in temporary housing
- 1 consumer had an Acute Psychiatric Hospitalization or "5150" hold
- 4 consumers returned to the DC from provisional placement
- 3 consumers passed away

The Department is in the process of establishing a Quality Management Advisory Group (QMAG) for SDC. The first meeting of the SDC QMAG is expected to be held in January 2016. The SDC QMAG will include

representation from consumers, parents and family members of current and former SDC residents, regional centers, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities and Disability Rights California.

The role of the SDC QMAG is to provide guidance to DDS and the regional centers in the refinement of the SDC Quality Management System, including the identification of corrective measures where needed. The members will review a variety of data to understand the quality of services being provided to former SDC residents, and measure the outcomes. Review and evaluation of the data will be further enhanced with the involvement of the independent monitor.

Not a specific question from the last meeting, but an issue that keeps coming up from families: **More Information Regarding Delayed egress/Secured Perimeter Homes**

Limited authority now exists for residential facilities to be equipped with both delayed egress devices and secured perimeter fences. These safety features are carefully designed for individuals who, due to difficult-to-manage behaviors or a lack of hazard awareness and impulse control, would pose a risk of harm to themselves or others. The addition of a secured perimeter ensures that individuals are supervised when they wish to go outside the property limits.

The statutory authority and program standards identify a number of safeguards and protections for utilizing secured perimeters. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Based on a comprehensive assessment, the ID Team must determine and document whether the individual lacks hazard awareness or impulse control and requires the level of supervision afforded by a delayed egress/secured perimeter home. Every 90 days after admission, the ID Team must determine its continued appropriateness;
- The home must specify in its plan of operation:
 - How interior and exterior space is to be made available to permit individuals to move freely and safely
 - How the licensee will ensure the protection of consumers' personal rights
 - Staff qualifications and staff training curricula
 - Procedures for responding to a consumer's desire to leave the facility
 - Emergency evacuation procedures
- In addition to any other required training, the licensee must provide specialized training to staff that includes: the personal rights of facility residents; behavior management techniques for consumers lacking hazard awareness and impulse control; and emergency procedures in the event of a medical emergency or facility disaster.
- All Fire Marshal codes, regulations and standards are applicable.

Preliminary information indicates that 5 residents of Sonoma may need the services of a Delayed Egress/Secured Perimeter home. Consideration of this alternative would need to be fully explored by the ID Team, including the protections identified above.