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North Suburban Human Rights Authority  
Report of Findings  
Camelot  
**HRA #08-100-9024**

Case Summary: The allegations were unsubstantiated. The HRA's public record on this case is recorded below.

The North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority (HRA) of the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission has completed its investigation of alleged rights violations at Camelot. On February 12, 2008, the HRA notified Camelot of its intent to conduct an investigation, pursuant to the Guardianship and Advocacy Act (20 ILCS 3955). The following allegations were accepted for investigation:

- The residential sites are unsanitary (i.e. urine soaked carpets and insects).
- Some residents were subject to unhealthy paint fumes since the painting occurred while the residents were present.
- The units are short-staffed.
- There is no food on the units for the residents to have a snack.
- A resident residing in the Morning Start building was severely injured by a staff member.

If found substantiated the allegations would violate the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (405 ILCS 5/2-102) and the Licensing Standards for Child Care Institutions and Maternity Centers (89 Ill. Admin. Code 404). "Child care institution" means a child care facility where more than 7 children are received and maintained for the purpose of providing them with care or training or both. The term "child care institution" includes residential schools, primarily serving ambulatory handicapped children, and those operating a full calendar year.

**Background**

The Residential Treatment Center, the focus of the HRA investigation is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). The following was taken from Camelot's Web-site:

*"Camelot's Residential Treatment Center located in Des Plaines serves children and adolescents, ages 5 to 21, with an IQ as low as 25.*

***AUTISM AND ASPERGERS PROGRAM***

*These programs specialize in the treatment of all disorders within the autism spectrum, including Aspergers. Children, ages 6 to 18, are individually assessed and given customized treatment plans to meet their specific needs. We provide one-to-one staffing where necessary to assure adherence to individualized treatment plans and the highest level of safety.*

### ***TREATMENT MODEL***

*Camelot is committed to integrating the latest proven approaches, including Applied Behavioral Analysis, in working with children and adolescents impacted by autism. The foundation for our work, the Developmental Individualized Relationship Model, is relationship based, child centered, goal directed, flexible in its application, adaptable to diverse settings and aimed at the individual's inherent potential.*

*Our client base is extremely diverse, and includes children with additional complications which have contributed to treatment difficulties and failures during past placements:*

- *Health Impairments*
- *Prader-Willi Syndrome*
- *Sexual Identity Issues*
- *Incontinence*
- *Hearing Impairment*
- *Verbal Impairment*
- *Intelligence levels of 25 and above*

### ***SPECIALIZED PSYCHIATRIC PROGRAM***

*This program treats children and adolescents who are dealing with a variety of mental health needs. We provide a structured living environment that fosters independence and personal responsibility while providing a curriculum tailored to the individual needs of the child.*

### ***TREATMENT MODEL***

*The program's level of treatment is appropriate for children who no longer need an acute psychiatric setting but are not yet ready for group home living or foster care. The most common diagnoses include:*

- *Bipolar Disorder*
- *Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*
- *Posttraumatic Stress Disorder*
- *Major Depressive Disorder*

- *Psychotic Disorders*

*All residents of the residential treatment center also attend the therapeutic day school 205 days per year."*

### **Investigative Methodology**

To pursue this investigation, a site visit was conducted (March 12, 2008) at which time the allegations were discussed with the Executive Director, the Director of Risk Management, and two representatives from the Corporate Office. The HRA requested and reviewed agency policies specific to the allegation.

**Allegations: The residential sites are unsanitary (i.e. urine soaked carpets and insects).  
Some residents were subject to unhealthy paint fumes since the painting occurred while the residents were present.**

### **Findings**

At the site visit, the HRA learned that Camelot is a nationally marketed program. Of the fifty-seven residents at the Des Plaines location (capacity - sixty), seventeen are from Illinois. The investigated property is on a five year lease from a residential program located on the same campus. The site consists of three buildings with two residential floors and a basement in each. The first and third building basements hold administrative and nursing services; the second building basement is recreational. While the ages accepted into the program are 16-21, the current clients are aged 12-19. All residents are involved in school or work during the day. The typical length of stay is 12 months, although some may remain as long as 5 years. The residents are segregated by diagnostic category and somewhat by age. Camelot has been in this location for two years. Prior to Camelot occupancy, the buildings were dormitories for the previous residential program.

It was explained to the HRA that much of the carpeting was inherited from the previous residential site, and that it did need to be removed. It was stated that all of the carpeting would eventually be removed (the worst first) and replaced with laminated wood flooring. The HRA toured each building and witnessed renovations occurring, which included repainting and replacement of carpeting. There were no odors of urine.

Regarding the allegation about insects, the HRA spoke with the Director of Nursing and she stated that there were scabies reported in one building and an outside insect control service was contacted to spray each building. It was offered that subsequent to the fumigation services the units are now free from any insects.

It was reported that all renovations, including painting the units, are done while the residents are away at school. Only latex non-toxic paint is being used. The Director stated that they did receive one complaint regarding a resident being very allergic to the paint fumes. It was stated that this resident's parent was contacted to take the resident home during this time. (The program allows \$500 per resident family, per quarter, for out of state parents to visit).

The HRA requested and received a copy of the maintenance department's custodial check list, which shows about 36 tasks that are to be done on an as needed, daily or weekly basis. The tasks included: clean walls, windows, doors, and floors; remove trash, mop, inspect thermostat/proper setting, etc.

The Infection Control Program policy states that Camelot School shall maintain an active, facility-wide Infection Control Program. Through prevention, surveillance, and control of infections, a clean and safe environment will be provided for residents, employees, and any other individuals who may come in contact with the facilities of Camelot. The policy states (in part) that all food shall be stored in pest-resistant containers and at the proper temperature to reduce spoilage. The Housekeeping service shall have the following responsibilities for Infection Control: carrying out frequent and thorough cleaning procedures throughout the entire facility's environment, which will minimize any contamination or infectious agent, which may be injurious to health. The sanitary handling of soiled linens and for the provision of sanitary storage of clean linens; sanitary storage and disposal of waste and refuse.

#### Conclusion

Pursuant to the Licensing Standards for Child Care Institutions and Maternity Centers Section 404.44, buildings shall be maintained in compliance with state and local ordinances for health, safety and sanitation. Housekeeping and repair programs shall be scheduled and shall be the responsibility of housekeeping and maintenance personnel.

Regarding the unsanitary conditions, it is difficult to say what conditions were like when the complaint was made to the HRA. The carpeting is being replaced and the units have been fumigated - resolutions to both matters.

Regarding the allegation that some clients were subject to unhealthy paint fumes since the painting occurred while the residents were present, it was stated that one resident was sent home due to the paint fumes. It was also stated that the painting did not occur while the residents were present. The allegation is unsubstantiated.

#### **Allegation: The units are short-staffed.**

#### Findings

The Director admitted that they had initially hired some inappropriate staff and that those staff were terminated which left some units short-staffed. It was stated that the program is down ten positions and they are trying to fill those positions. It was maintained that through the use of elective overtime they have been able to guarantee a staff to resident ratio of 1:4. The HRA received copies of the staffing-schedule for the period in question and noted that the ratios were maintained.

The Human Resources policy states that Camelot Schools is committed to providing the appropriate number of personnel during all hours of operations, to support its functions and provide the appropriate care for its clients, the policy goes on to indicate that the following procedures will be followed to ensure compliance with the staff policy:

- Department supervisors will ensure that appropriate staff is available at all times.
- All patients/clients speaking languages other than English may have staff assigned who can communicate in that language.
- Personnel who can communicate with the hearing and/or visually impaired may also be available.
- Supervisors are responsible for maintaining scheduling records.

### Conclusion

Pursuant to the Licensing Standards for Child Care Institutions and Maternity Centers Section 404.28 "Groupings and supervision of children shall provide for individual attention and consideration of each child. Groups shall consist of a maximum of 15 children. Child care staff shall provide appropriate supervision to children at all times. There shall be: 1) no more than 12 children when there are children between 6 and 12 years of age in the group. In case of an emergency the institution must be able to provide for the safety of the children. For night time supervision, there shall be at least one person on duty and awake for each two groups occupying common or attached living quarters. Girls shall be under the direct supervision of adult female staff during the night. Additional staff shall be on call in case of emergency or other need. When the needs of individual children dictate, additional staff may be required to meet the needs of all children. The appropriate ratio shall be determined through consultation among the parent/guardian, staff, resource personnel and the Department.

Based on the written and verbal information obtained; the child to staff ratio has been maintained; the allegation is unsubstantiated.

**Allegation: There is no food on the units for the residents to have a snack.**

### Findings

During the unit inspections, the HRA noted that each unit had snack items in the kitchens (nutrition bars, snack mix, chips, etc.) and the items observed did not appear to be recent purchases made for the purpose of this investigation. The HRA reviewed a weekly menu, and noted that snacks were listed twice - between lunch and dinner and once after dinner. The snacks included, nutrition bars, Ritz bits, fruit snacks, animal crackers, peanuts, etc.

The three-page Policy on Nutritional and Dietary services states (in part) that no more than 14 hours will elapse between serving of the evening meal and the next substantial meal for clients who are on oral intake and do not have dietary requirements.

### Conclusion

Pursuant to Section 404.38, Food and Nutrition, three balanced meals shall be served each day. The time span between service of one meal and the next meal shall not be greater than 14 hours (overnight). Based on what was observed at each unit, the HRA does not substantiate the allegation that there is no food on the units for a resident to have a snack.

**Allegation: A resident residing in the Morning Start building was severely injured by a staff member.**

### Findings

It was stated that the only incident that came to mind was when a resident assaulted a staff person. It was stated that when staff members tried to control resident, he hit his head. The resident was subsequently taken to the hospital where exhaustive testing was done and no injuries were found. It is noted that the complaint was unable to provide the HRA with a named staff member or a specific date of incident. Subsequent to the visit, the HRA requested documentation (from the new Director) regarding this incident, but the documentation could not be located due to a lack of identifying data. It was stated that all staff members are trained in TCI (therapeutic crisis intervention) and abuses are never to be tolerated.

### Conclusion

Section 404.37, Health and Safety, mandates that staff shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from harm at all times. The HRA found nothing to support the claim that a resident was severely beaten by a staff member; the allegation is unsubstantiated.