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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority  
Report of Findings  
HRA #10-100-9010  
Elgin Mental Health Center

Case Summary: the HRA did not substantiate the allegations presented. The HRA's public record on this case is recorded below; the provider's response immediately follows the report.

**Preface**

In February 2010, the North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority (HRA) opened this investigation regarding Elgin Mental Health Center, Forensic Treatment Program, Hartman Unit. A complaint was received alleging that a recipient is being denied some personal hygiene products and that he had been unable to obtain an inventory document showing that his computer was in storage.

If found substantiated, the allegation would be a violation of the Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (405 ILCS 5/2-102).

**Milieu**

Recipients receiving services at EMHC's Forensic Treatment Program have been remanded by Illinois County Courts to the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) under statutes finding them Unfit to Stand Trial (UST) and Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI). Placement evaluations determine the most appropriate inpatient or outpatient setting for forensic treatment based on a number of factors including age, gender, mental health diagnosis, and security need. Unless a person is specifically ordered to receive services in an outpatient setting, court ordered referrals under state forensic statutes call for placement in a secure inpatient setting. The Forensic Treatment Program has 315 beds.

**Investigative Methodology**

To pursue this investigation, an on-site visit was conducted at which time the allegations were discussed with the Unit Manager. The recipient whose rights were alleged to have been violated was interviewed via telephone and in person.

**Investigative Findings**

The recipient whose rights were alleged to have been violated reported (January 2010) that he has been denied toothpaste and his toothbrush because staff members told him that he brushes his teeth too much. He also reported that he needs alcohol pads to prevent germs, but he is also being denied this item. The complainant reported that he purchased a computer and that it was in storage; he wanted an inventory document showing that it was in storage, but this request has been denied. The HRA met with the recipient (March 2010); he stated that his personal hygiene items were never restricted. He reported that his computer had recently been sent home with family members.

At the site visit it was stated that per policy, when a recipient is placed on frequent observations, all potentially dangerous personal items are removed from the room for safety reasons.

Personal hygiene products, if removed, would be available when needed. It was stated that recipients are not allowed to possess alcohol products for safety reasons. The Unit Manager stated that this recipient had recently been on frequent observations.

Regarding the inventory document, it was stated that when a computer is obtained for personal use, the computer must be inspected by MIS (Management Information Systems) personnel before it enters the unit. The computer was stored in the contraband unit area; security personnel maintain this area and would have recorded the computer on their security log. Thus, the recipient did not in fact, have an inventory document showing the computer because the computer had not been cleared for personal use. The computer was subsequently sent home with family members; the recipient confirmed that the computer was sent home.

The Center's Special Observation policy states that, "whenever a patient is placed on special observation, a room search shall be conducted, including clothing that the patient is wearing. Potentially dangerous objects shall be removed. Such items include shoelaces, belts, coins, scarves and other items that a patient could use to hurt self or others."

A review of the clinical record showed that the recipient was on frequent observations from December 21, 2009 until January 5, 2010. The chart contained daily physician's orders for the precaution.

### **Conclusion**

Pursuant to Section 5/2-102 of the Mental Health Code, "A recipient of services shall be provided with adequate and humane care and services in the least restrictive environment, pursuant to an individual services plan."

The recipient initially stated that he had been restricted from using some personal hygiene products; this assertion was recanted a few months later. The recipient had been placed on frequent observations, and per policy, potentially dangerous objects are removed from a recipient's room. Alcohol items are prohibited for safety reasons.

The recipient did not have an inventory document for his computer because the computer was being assessed for safety. Once the computer was cleared, an inventory document would have been completed. As noted above, the computer was subsequently sent home.

Based on the information obtained, the findings do not substantiate the allegations presented.

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## **RESPONSE**

**Notice: The following page(s) contain the provider response. Due to technical requirements, some provider responses appear verbatim in retyped format.**

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Pat Quinn, Governor



Michelle R.B. Saddler., Secretary

**Division of Mental Health - Region 2**  
**Elgin Mental Health Center — Singer Mental Health Center**

**RECOVERY IS OUR VISION**  
 Recovery is a Personal Journey of Hope, Healing, Growth, Choice, and Change

April 23, 2010

Mr. Dan Haligas - Chairperson  
 North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority  
 9511 Harrison Street, W-300  
 Des Plaines, IL 60016-1565

Re: HRA #10-100-9010

Dear Mr. Haligas:

Thank you for your recent investigation. I am glad to hear these allegations were unsubstantiated. Elgin staff pride themselves on providing excellent care to our patients.

I would request that this response be attached to the report and be included with any public release of your Report of Findings.

Sincerely,

Tajudeen Ibrahim, BA  
 Acting Hospital Administrator

TI/JJP/aw

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