



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

North Suburban Human Rights Authority
Report of Findings
Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital
HRA #15-100-9021

The North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority (HRA) of the Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission has completed its investigation of alleged rights violations at Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital (ABBHH). In June 2015, the HRA notified ABBHH of its intent to conduct an investigation pursuant to the Guardianship and Advocacy Act (20 ILCS 3955). The complaints accepted for investigation were that a consumer was not given clothing items that were provided from a family member and that the hospital did not provide personal hygiene items.

The rights of mental health consumers are protected by the Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (405 ILCS 5).

To pursue this investigation, the HRA interviewed hospital personnel. The HRA reviewed the consumer's clinical record with written consent and reviewed hospital policy specific to the allegations.

Background

Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital is a 110-bed psychiatric hospital located in Hoffman Estates. It offers mental health and addictions treatment, including inpatient, partial hospitalization, intensive outpatient and outpatient services for children, adolescents and adults.

Findings

The clinical record revealed data on an adolescent female admitted to the hospital on April 27, 2015; she was discharged April 30, 2015. The consumer was admitted to the Eating Disorder/Self-Injury Recovery Services program.

On April 29th, the Case Manager documented that the consumer's mother called expressing frustration about the consumer not receiving her belongings quickly and not hearing from the treatment team. The mother reported that the consumer had not received her Chapstick and sweatpants and that the consumer had soiled herself and had to sit in dirty clothing. The Case Manager documented that the Chapstick was in the medication room and that she would discuss the belongings concerns with nursing personnel. The note indicated that the Case Manager informed the mother that nursing had followed-up with the concerns. The record contained a note by nursing personnel saying that the belongings issue was reviewed with the consumer and the consumer verbalized understanding of hospital rules and clothing. On April 30th, the mother called the hospital saying that the consumer still did not have any pants to wear.

At the site visit, hospital personnel explained that consumers are allowed three sets of clothing. Consumers are expected to arrive with clothing or clothing is to be brought in by family

members post admission. All hygiene products are supplied by the hospital. It was stated that personal belongings are inventoried. The hospital does not provide additional clothing items for the consumers to wear during the hospitalization. The Program Coordinator told the HRA that after hearing that the family member was concerned about the consumer's clothing, she spoke with the consumer to see if her clothes were ill-fitting and/or uncomfortable. The consumer reported that the clothes were fine. The HRA asked about the clinical entry that stated that the consumer had sat in soiled clothes; staff members stated that at no time were they aware that the consumer had been in soiled clothing. Hospital personnel stated that the consumer had no complaints during her hospitalization. The clinical record reviewed by the HRA did not contain an inventory list. Hospital personnel stated that a list was completed. Subsequent the visit, the HRA was informed that the list could not be located.

The HRA conducted a unit tour and observed the personal hygiene products given at the time of admission. The products are in individual bins and contain items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, mouthwash, comb, etc.

The HRA interviewed two consumers; both consumers were very satisfied with staff members, the availability of hygiene items and were aware of the three outfit rule. It was noted by the consumers that laundry facilities are available.

The hospital's Storage of Patients Personal Property policy states that patients may keep personal property in their room except sharps, any objects in glass containers, or items deemed unsafe or untherapeutic. The hospital's Patient Valuables policy states that "if certain valuables are to be retained at bedside or if the patient refused to deposit certain items, the nursing staff will give a brief description of those items on the Hospital Liability for Personal Property Form and have it signed by the patient or a responsibility family member if available, and a nursing staff member."

The consumer handbook given at the time of admission, explains that only three sets of clothing and two sets of pajamas are allowed. The handbook also notes that all hygiene products will be supplied by the hospital. Sanitary products (pads/tampons) can be brought in but must be in a new unopened box/package. Chapstick can be brought in but also must be in a new unopened original package.

Conclusion

Pursuant to the Illinois Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, Section 2-104, "every recipient who resides in a mental health or developmental disabilities facility shall be permitted to receive, possess and use personal property and shall be provided with a reasonable amount of storage space therefor, except in the circumstances and under the conditions provided in this Section."

Without the clothing inventory, there is no way to know what was brought in for the consumer to wear. The Program Coordinator stated that she spoke to the consumer after hearing about the mothers concerns and the consumer reported that everything was fine – however there is nothing to support this conversation. The HRA can neither confirm nor deny the allegation that a consumer was not given clothing items that were provided from a family member. The hospital provides all consumers with personal hygiene items; we found nothing to support the claim that this consumer was not given any hygiene items.

Suggestions

The hospital must ensure that all clinical documentation (i.e. inventory list) is secured. Also, when there is a concern about the services being received, best practice dictates that all communication about that concern be documented.

RESPONSE

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



ALEXIAN
BROTHERS
Behavioral Health Hospital

October 20, 2015

Mr. Arthur A. Savage, Vice Chairperson
North Suburban Regional Human Rights Authority
North Suburban Regional Office
9511 Harrison Street, W-300
Des Plaines, IL 60016-1565

RE: HRA #15-100-9021

Dear Mr. Savage,

Thank you for your letter, dated October 7, 2015 of the findings of the investigation into the above referenced case.

As for the Commission's suggestion of ensuring all clinical documentation is secured, we are taking measures to ensure this happens while we are converting from a paper record to an electronic record.

We would like to thank you for your review of the allegations and welcome the opportunity to work with the Commission to ensure patient rights are not violated. If additional information is needed, please do not hesitate to contact me at the number below.

Sincerely,

Patricia Getchell

Patricia Getchell
Director Risk Management/Patient Advocacy/Patient Safety
847-755-8507