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CORPUS CHRISTI SSLC BACKSLIDES IN FOURTH ROUND COMPLIANCE REVIEW

Austin, TX – The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) has released a monitoring report indicating people with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in the Corpus Christi State Supported Living Center (SSLC) remain at high risk for abuse and neglect due to the facility's continued noncompliance on basic health and safety provisions.

More than two years since the implementation of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) settlement agreement with DADS, which was established to ensure residents' mental and physical health and safety, the Corpus Christi SSLC was found to be compliant in only 22 of 171 provision areas, less than 13 percent of all areas.

The DOJ settlement agreement delineates specific deadlines by which compliance must be met for each of the 171 provisions, ranging from 2009 through 2013. These deadlines require the Corpus Christi SSLC already to have met standards in 139 provision areas; the facility was found to be out of compliance in 119 of those provisions, resulting in noncompliance outside of settlement agreement deadlines in 86 percent of all areas.

Even though it has been more than two years since the implementation of the DOJ settlement agreement, the Corpus Christi facility continues to show limited to no improvements in many areas, including those identified below, and has in fact lost compliance in three major areas in which it had previously been determined to have met standards: protection from harm – restraints; protection from harm – abuse, neglect and incident management; and pharmacy services and safe medication practices.

The following significant failures were reported at the Corpus Christi SSLC:

- Use of physical and chemical restraints had continued to increase in each of the last two site visits, and the accuracy of restraint documentation had declined.
- Monitors' review of resident records indicated that "comprehensive, thorough and adequate assessments were missing in many areas, including but not limited to nursing, speech and communication, psychiatry, skill acquisition and day/vocational, and physical and nutritional supports."
- The clinical indicators needed to measure quality of care and improvement in residents' health had not been determined by the facility.
- Medication errors remained a problem at the facility.
- Statistics indicated limited progress in reducing the use of multiple drugs at a time. Often, the number of medications that an individual received made it difficult to determine each medication's efficacy.
- "Limited progress was observed in the area of psychological assessments and additional psychological supports."
- Limited progress also was noted in the area of positive behavioral support plans, and significant concerns remained about their adequacy.
- "Consistent with the findings from the past reviews, there was no appreciable progress made in the critical areas addressing nursing health management plans, nursing assessment and documentation in response to changes in status, and the quality and timeliness of the quarterly and annual nursing assessments."
- Concerns remained about the adequacy of many elements the habilitation, training, education and skill acquisition plans and programs of residents.
- "Community Living Discharge Plans continued to inadequately define the necessary protections, support and services to ensure the individual's health and safety."

"The newest monitoring review of the Corpus Christi facility is disturbing, as it indicates the center is still failing to meet the basic health and safety needs of its residents," said Beth Mitchell, supervising attorney for Disability Rights Texas, the federally designated legal protection and advocacy agency for Texans with disabilities.

"More than two years into the Settlement Agreement, the facility continues to backslide in making the necessary improvements to the protections, supports and services provided to residents," Mitchell added. "Their lack of progress is truly troubling given how little time remains for the facility to gain compliance."

For more information on the February 29, 2012, Corpus Christi SSLC Monitoring Team Report, visit www.dads.state.tx.us/monitors/reports/index.html.

For additional information on how all the state supported living centers are performing, visit the Disability Rights Texas onsite Press Room at www.disabilityrightstx.org/who-we-are/press-room/.

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Disability Rights Texas is a nonprofit disability advocacy organization that protects and advances the legal, human and service rights of Texans with a broad range of disabilities. Disability Rights Texas is federally funded and designated as the protection and advocacy agency (P&A) for the state of Texas. In March 2011, the agency changed its name from Advocacy Inc. to Disability Rights Texas.