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LATEST DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE REPORT FOR MEXIA STATE SUPPORTED LIVING CENTER INDICATES RESIDENTS REMAIN AT HIGH RISK FOR ABUSE AND NEGLECT

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

"Our organization closely monitors the outcomes of these compliance reports, and we continue to have grave concerns as the SSLCs are still failing to meet the most basic health and safety needs of residents," said Beth Mitchell, supervising attorney for Disability Rights Texas (DRTx), the federally designated legal protection and advocacy agency for Texans with disabilities. "Facilities are regressing rather than progressing in their ability to provide care and treatment."

The Mexia facility achieved negligible progress since the last report, with overall compliance increasing just over 1 percent, from 20.29 to 21.38. **Some of Mexia SSLC's areas of significant failure as listed in the report are:**

- There were 576 injuries reported during the 3 months period of 6/1/12 - 8/31/12. These included 18 serious injuries resulting in fractures or sutures.
- During the 3 months period of 6/1/12 - 8/31/12, there were 17 confirmed cases of physical abuse, 1 confirmed case of sexual abuse, 4 confirmed cases of verbal/emotional abuse, and 48 confirmed cases of neglect.
- MSSLC was in noncompliance for all 15 sections of the provision of the Settlement Agreement regarding psychiatric care and services. The role of the lead psychiatrist was not clear to the monitoring team.
- There was no longer a consulting psychiatrist with expertise in serving minors although several minors reside at Mexia.
- The total number of restraints used for crisis intervention had increased by more than 25 percent since the previous monitoring visit.
- Even when the IDT articulated that an individual did not have an accurate diagnosis and/or indication to continue the medication, the psychiatrist proceeded with giving the individual the same medication, did not amend the documentation, and did not correct the diagnosis because of the paperwork task.
- The facility made no progress in the development of a medical quality program and there appeared to be little enthusiasm for doing so.
- The Inter-Disciplinary Team (IDT) was not yet competent at developing an integrated plan that included all needed supports and services based on preferences and needs of each individual.
- There continued to be problems with nurses who failed to respond appropriately to ensure adequate follow-up for individuals who had suffered acute illnesses and injuries.
- Assessments had been completed for each individual, but the quality of those was poor.
- There was no collaboration of speech and psychology or integration in the Positive Behavioral Support Plans or Individual Support Plans.
- MSSLC was engaging in some, but not all, of the activities required to educate individuals, legally authorized representatives (LARs), family members, and the MSSLC staff about community living options.
- MSSLC needs to have a functioning, active, and comprehensive quality assurance program

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The Mexia SSLC is not alone in its failure to comply in many areas. All SSLCs in Texas have fallen significantly short of achieving total compliance though the deadline for doing so in all monitoring provisions, but for two which relate only to records, was June 26, 2012. Current total compliance is at 25 percent or less for all facilities.

“As the designated and only forensic SSLC, psychiatric care is one of the primary medically necessary treatments for those residing at Mexia. It is thus very troubling that Mexia SSLC has failed to meet any of the sections related to psychiatric care,” Mitchell noted. “And now that the deadline for 100 percent compliance has passed, all facilities are still significantly behind where they should be in improving the protections, supports, and services they provide to individuals under their care.”

Visit <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/monitors/reports/index.html> for view the latest DOJ monitoring reports for SSLCs in Texas.

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 (formerly named Advocacy Inc.) is a nonprofit 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.