

**Department of Human Services
Judiciary Committee
Senator Nething, Chairman
April 11, 2012**

Chairman Nething and members of the Judiciary Committee, I am Alex C. Schweitzer, Cabinet Lead for the Institutions and the Regional Human Service Centers for the North Dakota Department of Human Services. Thank you for the opportunity to report on the sex offender treatment program at the North Dakota State Hospital.

The evaluation and treatment program for sexually dangerous individuals has operated at the North Dakota State Hospital since 1997. The North Dakota State Hospital currently operates 76 beds for the purpose of evaluation and treatment of sex offenders. Since the program's inception, the hospital's evaluators have completed 137 sex offender evaluations. Of that number, 84 sex offenders have been committed to the care and custody of the Executive Director of the Department of Human Services for treatment. The Hospital has discharged 19 sex offenders who have successfully completed the requirements of the program. Of these 19 patients, two have returned to prison for crimes not of a sexual nature and one offender who was discharged on a post community commitment returned for further inpatient treatment.

The Hospital currently serves 60 patients committed to the sex offender program, three patients in the correctional system and four patients currently being evaluated to determine the need for commitment and treatment. We also have one patient in the transitional housing program, which is the last stage of treatment prior to discharge from the program.

The patients in this program reside in the secure services unit on the grounds of the Hospital, and all outside activities are within a secured and monitored fence area. The treatment program is devised for a patient to advance through stages of treatment and at each stage they earn privileges for completing good work. These privileges include: escorted privileges on the Hospital grounds, participation in work opportunities on the unit and the grounds, and in the last stage moving to housing on the Hospital grounds. The advancement through the stages of treatment is carefully reviewed and approved by the treatment team, unit management, a secure services advisory committee, the Superintendent of the State Hospital and the Executive Director of the Department of Human Services.

The current annual cost per patient in the program is \$89,253. The program has 86 full time equivalents that must carry out the unique role of treatment provider and security personnel.

The 2007 ND Legislature mandated that the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation enter into an agreement with the Department of Human Services to provide security services for the sex offender unit located at the North Dakota State Hospital. The James River Correctional Center provides security consultation, training, and services to the North Dakota State Hospital under this agreement.

The James River Correctional Center provides the following security services to the North Dakota State Hospital's sex offender treatment and evaluation program:

1. Security training consisting of over 24 hours of initial training in the first year of an employee's employment;
2. Annual half-day refresher course each year for all employees;
3. Consultation regarding security measures and procedures;
4. Providing security backup and emergency personnel (SORT Team) in crisis situations;
5. Perimeter surveillance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

I am pleased to report that security measures in the secure services unit are greatly enhanced because of the training, consultation and services of the James River Correctional Center.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions.