

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

September 21, 2012



Speaking out for people with
intellectual and developmental
disabilities

www.vor.net



Feedback or questions?
info@vor.net

Join or Donate
to VOR Today!

Refer a Friend!

Advocacy
Toolkit for
Families

VOR.net:
Your one-stop
advocacy
resource

VOR Weekly News Update

News and views for VOR advocates

VOR is a national organization that advocates for high quality care and human rights for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Follow us on Twitter!
@VOR_NET
Like us on Facebook!
/VOR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

VOR and YOU

- 1. Reminders:** Celebrating Home, Building Memberships, and Legacy Giving
- 2. New to VOR's Website:** New links added to [Resources for Families and Advocates](#) Page
- 3. VOR submits federal comments** in response to P&A's "public input" process; objects to deinstitutionalization priority

STATE NEWS

- 4. Michigan:** Deinstitutionalizing Michigan's mentally ill has been an underfunded disaster
- 5. New Jersey:** Coalition Formed to Battle Proposed Closing of Woodbridge, Totowa Developmental Centers
- 6. California:** Open Letter to State Lawmakers: Sonoma Developmental Center families call for "Transparency, Open Communication, and Options"
- 7. National:** Millions Headed To Disability Support Centers

Quotable, by Augusten Burroughs

Coming Up

- * Inclusive ICFs/MR – Wayne's Smile
- * VOR's Cristy Dwyer presents Olmstead Testimony In New York
- * What to look for if considering community placement – a checklist for families
- * Official press release re: Cristy Dwyer's academic achievement award

VOR and You

1. Reminders: VOR Awareness Event, Celebrating Home, Building Memberships, and Legacy Giving

VOR has several initiatives going on right now, all designed to make VOR a strong, effective and viable voice for all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Please consider participating and thank you!

* [VOR Awareness Event](#): Please help bring VOR's good work and necessary advocacy to more people!

* [Celebrating Home - Bringing Families Together Fundraiser](#): Shop early for the Holidays and benefit VOR! Visit VOR's [website](#) for more information, or just [start shopping](#). 50% of all sales will be donated to VOR.

* [Help Grow VOR! Numbers Count](#): Recruit 5 new members and earn a chance to win a free 2-year membership

* [Make a Lasting Impact with a Will Bequest](#)

THANK YOU!

2. New to VOR's Website: New [Resources for Families and Advocates](#) on VOR's Link Page

VOR continues to add links to organizations and other online resources that we find helpful to VOR's families and advocates.

Here's a sampling of what we added recently to the VOR [Families and Advocates Resource page](#):

* [Agricultural Communities for Adults with Autism](#)

* [ddAdvocates of Michigan](#)

* [Noah's Ark of Central Florida](#)

* [Special Dreams Farm \(MI\)](#)

* [Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center \(AZ\)](#)

* [Because We Care -- Beyond Inclusion \(WA\)](#)

3. VOR submits federal comments in response to P&A's "public input" process; objects to deinstitutionalization priority

VOR's Government Affairs Committee submitted federal comments this week to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Community Living (ACL). ACL sought comments on the proposed collection of the Statement of Goals and Objectives (SGPs) submitted by state P&As after a public input process. According to the proposal, SGPs

would be collected by ACL and the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities would monitor implementation of goals and provide technical assistance when a state P&A fell short of meeting its priorities.

In its written [comment](#), VOR stated that deinstitutionalization is a goal in most P&As' SGP, "yet VOR knows of no State P&A that has made any effort to determine if deinstitutionalization is a goal supported by those directly affected when ICFs/MR close – the residents and their families and legal guardians." VOR also objected to AIDD's monitoring and technical assistance role since AIDD shared and promotes an anti-ICF/MR bias. VOR called for "independent and oversight and an unbiased audit of P&A program outcomes."

[Read VOR's detailed comments.](#)

STATE NEWS

4. Michigan: Deinstitutionalizing Michigan's mentally ill has been an underfunded disaster

***Detroit Free Press* * September 16, 2012**

Michigan's 46 Community Mental Health agencies, serving nearly 200,000 people a year, have struggled, and often failed, to fulfill the mission they were charged with, partly because they never received promised resources. The rapid and largely unplanned closures of a dozen state psychiatric hospitals between 1987 and 2003 left the community system overwhelmed by the increased demand for services, but money, which champions of deinstitutionalization promised would follow patients into locally operated care, never materialized. In fact, mental health spending failed to keep pace even with inflation.

[Read more and comment](#)

5. New Jersey: Coalition Formed to Battle Proposed Closing of Woodbridge, Totowa Developmental Centers

***The Alternative Press* * Dr. Salvatore Pizzuro, Guest Columnist * September 15, 2012**

The State's plan to close the Woodbridge and Totowa Developmental Centers has elicited a strong response from the family members of residents, and at least three unions. The group believes that the residents of the two State Institutions for people with

developmental disabilities will be “removed from their homes” and face an uncertain future in community settings that may not be prepared to care for them.

[Read more](#)

6. California: Open Letter to State Lawmakers: Sonoma Developmental Center families call for “Transparency, Open Communication, and Options”

Parent Hospital Association – Sonoma Developmental Center * September 11, 2012

Excerpts follow. [Read complete letter here.](#)

PHA is an organization that includes the families and friends of the residents of Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC). Our primary focus is the safety and well-being of SDC’s residents. We support three guiding principles: Transparency, Open Communication, and Options for California’s developmentally disabled citizens. We also continue to support the Sonoma Developmental Center as one option for a select group of vulnerable disabled and we continue to believe in the care given to our loved ones residing at SDC.

Recently there has been a series of news articles that portray Sonoma Developmental Center and the care there in a negative context. While we welcome oversight, including the coverage on issues by the news media, we are concerned that some of these articles and stories contain inaccurate information and do not fairly portray SDC, its staff and residents. We also feel it is important to shed the light not just on the potential for abuse at the developmental centers, but elsewhere in our service system. It is a sad fact that, despite hiring practices that attempt to exclude those who might do harm, a few bad apples get through. The hiring practices at SDC match or exceed those for community homes in their scrutiny of potential employees. The reporting practices and procedures at SDC exceed those in place in any other setting.

Families of SDC residents have concerns that in isolated community homes where sometimes only two individuals may be working at a time, and those may be friends or family members, reporting may actually be less likely to occur. The truth is there is often no way to know what goes on in some community

homes.

For the reasons listed above, and many more that include our own personal stories, we continue to believe in the care SDC provides for our loved ones and pray that it continues to remain an option. Refine it, improve it, even restructure it, but do not let us lose it. There simply is no replacement that has worked for our loved ones who call it home.

[Read complete letter](#)

7. National: Millions Headed To Disability Support Centers

Disability Scoop * September 18, 2012

\$12.5 million is heading to Aging and Disability Resource Centers across the country, officials from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services said. Every state currently has or is in the process of creating an Aging and Disability Resource Center, federal officials indicated.

The funding will help support counselors who aid people with disabilities and their caregivers in accessing long-term services and supports. The centers are intended to serve as a single source for consumers of all income levels to identify the services and supports they qualify for.

[Read more](#)

8. Maine: Federal court rejects Maine's Medicaid complaint

Portland Press Herald * September 14, 2012

Gov. LePage would like to remove 24,000 low-income parents, as well as some elderly and 19- and 20-year-olds in order to balance the budget.

[Read More](#)

QUOTABLE

"I myself am made entirely of flaws, stitched together with good intentions." - Augusten Burroughs

Tel: (605) 399-1624
Toll Free: (877) 399-4867
Fax: (605) 399-1631
Email: info@vor.net

JOIN VOR. DONATE TO VOR. MAKE A DIFFERENCE

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

[Click here](#) to forward this email to a friend

VOR
836 S. Arlington Heights Rd.
#351
Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

