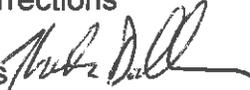




pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

TO: The Honorable John Wetzel
Secretary of Corrections

FROM: Theodore Dallas 
Secretary

RE: Comments Regarding Potential Prison Closures

DATE: January 27, 2017

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has been asked for potential impact regarding proposed closures and what DHS would do to relocate prisoners to other facilities. Corrections has a 10 bed Mental Health Unit (MHU) at Pittsburgh and a 90 bed Forensic Treatment Unit at Waymart.

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services' (OMHSAS) Bureau of Community & Hospital Operations would review and approve any new locations as determined by Corrections. DHS technically does not license them as we do not have promulgated regulations; however, OMHSAS has bulletins regarding the operations. DHS does not envision any challenge in accomplishing the visits within 30 days of notification of the locations from Corrections. Two visits to the new locations would occur - one prior to staffing being in place (physical site inspection) and the other once the unit(s) is operational.

DHS does not need a new commitment order to move an individual from one state hospital location to another, except if the individual is a not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) (304(g)(2)). We do not know if this same provision would apply to Corrections, but their legal counsel should be able to provide guidance. DHS does not have any part in the actual relocation of individuals. Based on the above information, we do not anticipate any issues in working with Corrections to relocate the beds from one facility to another.