



U.S. Attorney's Office And Civil Rights Division Sign Agreement Moves Forward On State-Wide Community Mental Health Reform

Reform Pursuant To The Americans With Disabilities Act And Olmstead

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 09, 2012

PORTLAND, Ore. - The United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and the United States Attorney for the District of Oregon have entered into an agreement with the State of Oregon for the collection and analysis of specific data to identify and address gaps in the State's delivery of community mental health services. The Agreement is a way to move forward with the monitoring of the State's delivery of services following the State's recent legislation to transform the delivery of healthcare. The Agreement continues the Justice Department's investigation, which began in 2010, to determine whether the state was illegally segregating individuals with disabilities in institutional settings when they could receive appropriate care through community based services. The Department's investigation stems from the related investigation of the Oregon State Hospital concerning conditions and treatment of patients, which began in 2006 and remains open. As stated in the agreement, it is the Department's and the State's intent to "work together to address the Department's concerns in this particular investigation by embedding reform in the design of the State's health care system."

"This agreement, coupled with Governor Kitzhaber's transformation of Oregon's health system, paves the way for transforming the way services are provided to people living with mental illness. By embedding reform in the design of the State's health care system, individuals with serious and persistent mental illness will have improved access to critical community services. Ultimately, these reforms will improve the lives of thousands of Oregonians living with mental illness," stated United States Attorney S. Amanda Marshall.

Pursuant to the Agreement, the Justice Department will continue to work with the State over the next four years to ensure the State's mental health system includes the necessary services, such as crisis support, so that the individuals needing care receive services in community-based settings, rather than in institutions. The State has agreed to deliver data to the Justice Department for a needs assessment analysis to address the federal law's integration mandate. It is the Department's hope that this agreement will lead to an array of adequate community services throughout Oregon, thereby resolving the Department's concerns.

The Justice Department and the State will host a community conference call with members of the public to address the Agreement's specifics. The call will take place on Tuesday, November 20, 2012 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. To participate, dial the following toll-free number: 1-888-942-9692, and when prompted by the operator, provide your name and the passcode "Oregon." The Justice Department requests that community members provide questions about the Agreement in advance of the call, by email to usaor.civilrights@usdoj.gov, or by calling 1-855-474-5577, no later than November 19th.

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