

Date: 12/29/2015

To: Commissioner Murray, DDS

From: Diane Morse
sister of resident of Southbury Training School

Re: STS Recommendations

My name is Diane Morse and I am the sister of a long term resident, Peter Dingley, of Southbury Training School. There is currently a bill before the legislature to close Southbury Training School and move the residents to group homes. Why? The residents are already in group homes called cottages at Southbury Training School. Utilizing and updating the current buildings at Southbury Training School for group homes would prove to be most cost effective for the state instead of securing new group homes in the community. Since there are long waiting lists (up to 18 months) for those seeking placement in group homes, using the current structures at STS for group homes would make the most sense. Southbury Training School could then begin to accept more residents into their group homes. therefore meeting a significant need for families dealing with a severely disabled family member.

Recommendation 1: Utilize and update current buildings at STS for use as group homes

Justification: Significant cost savings to the state, residents able to stay in their current group home with familiar staff members and current programming, STS able to take in new residents from families in need of a group home placement for their loved ones.

Recommendation 2: Continue operating cottages for current residents without accepting new ones until there are no residents left. Utilize empty cottages for veterans, as a nursing home, or as elderly housing.

Justification: Current residents able to stay in their current group home, empty cottages used to meet a significant societal need.

Peter has received good care for many years from a caring, professional staff. He has 24 hr. nursing care and recreational programs, such as music and outside trips, for stimulation. Southbury Training School has been beneficial for Peter as well as for our family. Please carefully reconsider and keep Southbury Training School open.

Sincerely,

Diane Morse