

EXHIBIT NO. 4DATE: 2/8/13BILL NO. SB 254

Montana Developmental Center and Storme Palmer

Key findings**Visit to MDC: 1/15/13****Living Conditions**

The building in which Storme lives consists of one very large open room with four bedrooms (two on either side of the open space and two bathrooms, one on either side. (Only one was working at the time of my visit). The kitchen had been removed, ostensibly to protect Storme from the temptation of food and reportedly there were problems with the kitchen involving other residents. Storme's bedroom is reminiscent of a nun's cell...very small with sparse furnishings (a small 4-drawer bureau) and an open closet with hook with linoleum tile floor and no rugs. The larger open space was essentially devoid of furnishings with the exception of a small round table with could accommodate four people and a couch situated in front of a television at the other end of the room; perhaps an additional chair and no rugs or carpeting. There were no homey or decorative touches. There was no privacy. Storme and I had to leave the building and go to another to find a private, somewhat comfortable spot to chat, which turned out to be an unused, empty room in another building without chairs (although we did find a couple to bring in). In short, I found Storme's living conditions to be quite cold, shabby, and not a place anyone should have to call home.

Vocational Training

There was essentially no vocational training provided. The MDC does have a small recycling area, a laundry area and a thrift shop which allow for working on some skills. On the day I visited, Storme chose to work in the recycling area which she did for approximately 30 minutes. There was no staff interaction, no skill training. Storme apparently knew what she had to do, did it, and left. I am unaware as to how the individuals are compensated for their labor. Her Individual Treatment Plan has a section for Vocational goals which simply stated that there would be an assessment of Storme's work abilities and assistance in helping her identify preferred jobs; that Storme would be provided assistance to complete work tasks in a safe, non-threatening or assaultive way, vis a vis staff encouragement, support, and validation. I witnessed none of this, nor have I reviewed an documents indicating progress in this area.

Socialization/Leisure

Storme's housing unit includes three other residents, all men, none of whom could be viewed as peers. Storme seemed to be familiar and friendly with the many individuals we encountered during the day, but there did not seem to be anyone with whom she was especially close, male or female. (This was verified by the staff) In following her activity schedule, it appeared that most of Storme's activities were performed alone or with one or two others who may or may not be someone she connects with. She receives 1:1 counseling sessions, 1:1 thirty minute school sessions while the recreation program does

seem to include small group activities on and off campus which may facilitate social interaction. During the evenings, between 6pm and 9pm, the schedule includes TV/Activity time. I didn't see many materials in the living space which would lend themselves to being a meaningful, or just fun activity.

Community Integration

The Recreation Department appears to provide a good range of on and off-campus activities. Community based activities include shopping, bowling, movies, bike riding, and visiting parks. I was unable to ascertain whether or not the staff actively promotes interaction with various community members during outings. Most community outings require traveling to Helena or Butte, which are each approximately 30 minutes away. The town of Boulder, where the MDC is located, has a population of approximately 1,500 citizens and few community amenities.

Homemaking Skills

In light of the absence of any typical home furnishings and appliances, there were no natural opportunities to practice home living skills, which are skills utilized routinely in community residential settings. Activities such as dusting, vacuuming, dishwashing, and other routine tasks were not available to be performed. She was responsible for taking care of her bedroom. At the time of my visit, her room was quite messy with an unmade bed and clothing strewn on the floor. (In spite of the fact that the scheduled bedroom clean-up time was 8:30am).

Transition Planning

A Community Placement Profile, including a cost assessment, was completed in September, 2012, and Storme was referred to the Developmental Disabilities Program through which Storme would be screened for services by in-state provider agencies. So, while she may be on a waiting list, there has been no interest shown by community providers and no proactive efforts taken by MDC to obtain an appropriate community placement as of this writing. The Placement Profile suggest, via its description of her needs that Storme, as a result of having PWS, would be best served in a PWS specific environment. I believe one such an environment exists in Montana, and Storme was a resident there at one point. Other community residential providers exist in the state, but none that specialize in serving individuals with PWS. We do know that there is an out-of state, nationally regarded agency that provides residential and vocational services to individuals with PWS, that has given a preliminary acceptance to Storme while it pursues Medicaid approval as a provider for Montana. It would seem that, given no appropriate residential services available in Montana, Storme would be referred to an out-of-state provider until a suitable program is developed in her home state. It is highly disturbing to know that Storme is being held in a facility, against her wishes and that of her family, when a specialized program exists and is prepared to receive her.

Individual Treatment Plan

Upon first receiving Storme's Individual Treatment Plan, I assumed it was an incomplete document, as there were few transition specific goals included. The document focuses on reducing problematic behaviors, rather than focusing on positive goals which would enable Storme to enter the adult community service system with some skills and interests that would facilitate her success. Storme does exhibit behavior difficulties that are consistent with having PWS. What we know is that many of those difficulties are resolved simply by placement in a PWS specific environment with a staff that is trained in serving these individuals. In short, any treatment plan should focus on her future life in the community and this plan does not. This is not to say that Storme is not receiving some valuable services, as she certainly is; however, the most valuable service of all would be identification of a permanent home and preparation for a successful transition.

In summary, many recommendations can (and will be) made regarding Storme's current placement at MDC. For the purpose of this summary, suffice it to say, that Storme Palmer is being held in a facility from which she receives minimal benefit, when a far superior and unquestionably appropriate placement is available to her. And it seems that there is no explanation being provided for this gross violation of this young woman's rights. Why is this ok? What is being done? By who? When will she be released? Where will she go? Who would like to speak with Storme ,to explain and justify what is being done (or not done) for Ms. Storme Palmer ?

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara J. Goff, Ed.D.

2/7/13