



JB Pritzker, Governor

Grace B. Hou, Secretary

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March 14, 2020

In order to appropriately respond to COVID-19 in a manner that ensures the safety of both individuals served and the staff working within our State Operated Psychiatric Hospital (SOPH) system, the Illinois Department of Human Services/Division of Mental Health (IDHS/DMH) will temporarily suspend Civil admissions to three of our SOPHs: Chicago Read Mental Health Center, Elgin Mental Health Center, and McFarland Mental Health Center. This will allow for a gradual reduction in census to provide dedicated and separate space necessary for triage of newly admitted patients. This space already exists at our remaining SOPHs, and we do not expect disruption to admissions at Madden Mental Health Center, Alton Mental Health Center, or Choate Mental Health Center. All six of these hospitals serve adults; this communication pertains to adults in need of psychiatric admission.

We understand the vital role that the SOPHs play and appreciate the potential difficulties created by suspending admissions. However, after careful consideration, we believe this to be the best course of action under the current circumstances. It is anticipated it will take one to two weeks to complete the process.

DHS/DMH will utilize our funding to support community hospitals capable of providing care to uninsured individuals who would have otherwise been admitted to a SOPH until those individuals are either appropriate for discharge or transferred into a SOPH. Further guidance to hospitals on payment mechanisms will be forthcoming.

Once the SOPHs have completed the gradual reduction based on discharges, we will communicate with you immediately and resume admissions. If you have any questions regarding alternatives, please contact Dr. Brad Hughes at Brad.hughes@illinois.gov or 217-836-2955.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.

Sincerely,

David Albert, PhD
Director, Division of Mental Health
Illinois Department of Human Services