

WHEN FACILITY CLOSURES GO TOO FAR

November, 2012

For the first time the news media has reported on a 2010 study that documented 55 deaths after the Lincoln Developmental Center (LDC) closed. **WICS-TV** in Springfield broadcast a graphic showing "11.1 % Died" and mentioned the figure on the air (November 8, 2012). We have only to look at this past in an attempt to gauge how many residents of the Jacksonville Developmental Center (JDC) or Warren G Murray Center (WGM) will die as a result of closure. Particularly, with current flawed time lines and transition plans.

If you "Google" search "Deaths at Lincoln Developmental Center," the first two listings are pertinent. While the State did not want to study the narrow question of the deaths after closing LDC, facts can be ascertained by a careful reading of- An Analysis of Movement from State Operated Developmental Centers in Illinois; September 2010, UIC Institute on Disability and Human Development and the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS). On page 34: Question 7: What are the characteristics of the individuals that have died since transition? Of the 164 persons that have died since transitioning out of an SODC.... "The majority of these individuals (33.5%) transitioned out of Lincoln." So, 55 people died after leaving LDC.

The second paper in the "Google" search is by Equip for Equality - LINCOLN DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER - The Politics of Closing a State Institution: Vulnerable People Fall Victim to Special Interests, undated but probably done in 2002. Piecing the time line together, DHS took 11 months to close LDC. Illinois is now in the process of taking about 10 months to close JDC. The same fatal "emergency closing" process used at LDC is being used at JDC! *Has DHS and the Governor not learned anything from the past?* In contrast, the Howe Developmental Center was closed much more slowly and **without all the deaths that happened at LDC.**

Is it reasonable to assume that 11.1% of the JDC residents are at risk of death after leaving JDC? This means of the 182 residents at JDC when closure began, 20 will die. Another scenario projects that 27 JDC residents are at risk of death. Similar projections point to 30 or more deaths if Murray Center residents in Centralia are forced into understaffed, undertrained and underfunded community providers. Residents of the affected Centers, family members, care givers, and-in-fact the entire great State of Illinois deserves better!

For further information, contact:

Rita Winkeler, President of Murray Parent's Association
1535 W. McCord Street
Centralia, IL 62801
Phone 618-210-9678

E-mail: ritawreads@gmail.com
www.murrayparentsassociation.com