

3/26/2015

To: The State Of Ohio

Re: the closing of MDC
Montgomery Developmental Center

*From: Jennifer A. Barr
(Loving & Desperate Mother)
Of
Kyle - 20yrs old
Autism & ocd
Severe Seizure Disorder +
many other health issues*

*I could not be there today and have sent this letter to each of you
in my place. I promise it will only take 2 or 3 minutes of your time.
It only seems long because I have enlarged the print and double
spaced so that it would be easier for you to read.
Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.*

Hello, and thank you in advance for your time and attention to what I have to say. I am sorry that I was not able to come before you in person today (as I am having a chemotherapy infusion) but please know that my words do come from my personal experiences and they hold a lot of emotion and passion. I will speak to you straight from my heart - as my son and his well being mean everything to me. My son Kyle Gambill is 20yrs old and has been at MDC for 2 ½ years. MDC has been a blessing to my son and to my family. I am so afraid of what will happen to my son if he no longer has a home at MDC. My son Kyle has Autism & OCD as well as many other health problems including a severe seizure disorder, migraines, heart condition, respiratory issues, beckwith-wiedemann syndrome, eczema, among other things. He is on a huge array of daily medications that require precise dosing and scheduled timing. Besides the mandatory medical needs my son requires, he also has just as many behavioral needs. My son can have aggressive outbursts and because of the path his seizure activity flows in his brain... he can be very aggressive preceding and leading up to a grand ma seizure. My son is a little over 6ft tall and 190lbs.

When Kyle becomes aggressive... even if it is because of seizure activity... it is very hard to manage and contain. Before coming to MDC, my son has resided in several group home settings. He has been at Lutheran Home Services up by Toledo (for almost 1yr), He has been at Community Concepts in Gratis (for 1 yr), and also been at a group home owned by DDS in Centerville with 2 and 3 other boys (for about 2 yrs). None of these settings worked out for my son, and looking back at them now, they all were a "nightmare" experience. None of the placements were able to provide for both the medical and behavioral needs that my son requires. LHS was adamant in wanting to "drug" my son into submission, Community Concepts tried to meet the needs but fell short and my son had to be escorted by the sheriffs department 3x either back to the facility or to a hospital....and while at the DDS home, the agency providing care continuously messed up his medications and dosing with their "delegated nursing training" and almost killed my son when he became ill (with H1N1) and they decided to take matters in their own hands. They forced down his afternoon medication causing him to aspirate on the liquid and then when his pulse and respiration decreased - they chose to drive him to the hospital

instead of calling an ambulance. My son almost died and ended up spending almost 3 months in the hospital. That agency providing care for the home was fired soon after because the mother of the other 2 boys accidentally caught one of the staff threatening to punch one of her boys. DDS added another boy to the home and we 3 mothers choose a new agency to provide care for the home. However... within the first 2 months of hiring the new agency to provide care for our boys (Kyle was not yet living back at the home but only doing daily visits and slowly getting to know and adjust to the new agency/staff) the agency staff called 911 (4 times) and each time Kyle was taken by a sheriff escorted ambulance to a local hospital where he would then be eventually transferred to Cincinnati Children's Hospital and admitted into the Behavioral Unit. Each trip to CCHMC was a 1-2 wk stay before Kyle was discharged. Kyle had only had 12 daily visits with 2 being overnight visits during this 2 month time frame with the new agency because of the hospital admittance; And, before Kyle was even given half of a chance, the new agency informed me that they were dropping Kyle as a client and said that they could not provide the type of care that he needed and required.

Again, we were left up the creek without a paddle. Let me say that throughout the years... the only thing that has saved us - was the fact that Kyle's Grandma was able to be his independent provider. Kyle also has a little brother who is 10yrs younger than he is and there have been several periods of time that Kyle has had to spend the majority of the time even having to sleep at his Grandmas house each night just to ensure the safety of my younger son. There are so many things that can upset Kyle's behaviors. If Kyle is sick and is prescribed antibiotics... he will have a lower seizure threshold therefore causing more behaviors... if we have to move a medication up or down-even if the change is for the good - we will have more behaviors until the medication adjusts in his system....if Kyle doesn't feel well or has a migraine we will have more behaviors...if Kyle gets stressed or his schedule is changed we will have more behaviors...the list goes on and on. How do you understand, treat and deal with or correct behaviors that are mainly caused by a medical upset? Group homes and agencies are not trained or equipped with the knowledge and set up to deal with this kind of situation. MDC is the first successful placement that Kyle has ever known. At MDC, Kyle has a chance to be the best

that he can be without judgment or retaliation against him for behaviors that he may not be able to control. At MDC Kyle has a community setting where he can interact with others, go swimming, play basketball, walk the trail, ride a bike or swing, go to dances and parties... even if he is not always on his "A" game. At MDC we can change one of Kyle's medications and know that the behaviors are coming and deal with them in a safe and healthy manor. At MDC we don't have to be threatened or worry about Kyle being kicked out of the place he calls home even if he is going through a rough patch!!! The thought of MDC closing is the most devastating news that I've ever heard. My heart is breaking and I am scared to death for me and for my son and his future!

Montgomery County does not have near enough facilities to accommodate our DDS population. There are counties towards Cincinnati and Columbus and Toledo that have numerous facilities to accommodate people with both medical and behavioral needs... Why in the world would the state choose to close MDC when even now Montgomery County doesn't have enough facilities to accommodate our group of people with both extreme medical and behavioral needs???

For a lot of the residents at MDC, this is the first chance that they've ever had at living in "a community"... MDC is a community in itself and this group of people cannot function in any other set up successfully! If you are closing MDC because of money... let me ask you this.... How much money do you think it cost the state when Kyle was in a group home and had to be escorted by sheriffs and ambulances to hospitals and transferred to other hospitals and then spend 1-2 weeks in a behavioral unit with intensive 2:1 staff 24hrs a day? I promise you that just one of those 911 sheriff/ambulance/hospital episodes probably cost the state about as much as it costs to keep Kyle at MDC for a whole month or two! Then think about that happening once a month if Kyle has to move out of MDC and go live in a group home and multiply that cost X the other 90som clients that reside there and tell me how much money the state will save then. Seriously.... Someone needs to consider the full circle effects of closing MDC. There has got to be another way to go. MDC is the Only facility in this area that is capable of handling and dealing with this type of unique and special group of individuals. The people that reside at MDC will not fit into your typical group home or ICF facility...

however these people with high medical and behavioral needs still have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and they are able to thrive if given the right tools and environment. They have that... most of them for the first time in their lives at MDC. I honestly believe that my son Kyle is at the safest and healthiest place he could be at MDC. I have tried group home and ICF settings for Kyle and they have not been able to handle his needs and responsibilities...I have always wanted to keep working and trying but "They" have been the ones that have kicked him out. MDC has a unique setting with specially trained staff and a team of doctors and leaders working together to ensure my son's health and safety. Since placing Kyle in MDC, I have been able to have peace of mind for the first time. For the first time, my son Kyle asks to go "Home" when he is ready... and how awesome that he has a place where he actually wants to be and has a place that feels like a home to him (even if it can't a home with me). This is how so many of the residents at MDC feel. Please don't take that away from them... please don't take that away from their families. My son has had to fight and be challenged his entire life....

As his mother, the one thing I've ever wanted to give my son was the Best life that he was able to have and to do right by him. I felt like I was finally fulfilling some of that goal when I placed Kyle into MDC and now it's being taken away. I beg you to reconsider and to find some other way. Closing MDC is not going to be your answer... it will inevitably end up causing a whole new world of problems and issues. You will be taking away so much more than you will gain and closing MDC will devastate so many more lives than you will ever know.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A Barr

(Mother of Kyle Gambill 20yrs old)

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