Testimony
Department of Human Services
Government Services Committee
Senator Ronald Sorvaag, Chairman
August 22, 2013

Chairman Sorvaag, members of the Government Services Committee, I am Kerry Wicks, Clinical Administrator for the Department of Human Services of the North Dakota State Hospital (NDSH). I am here today to testify on the study of the use of structures and property of the James River Correctional Center and the North Dakota State Hospital.

Summary of Programs at the North Dakota State Hospital:

The NDSH provides short-term acute inpatient psychiatric and substance abuse treatment, intermediate psycho-social rehabilitation services, and safety net services for adults. The people who receive these services are the NDSH's traditional population, and we utilize 123 beds for their evaluation and treatment. The current emphasis in terms of mental health and substance abuse treatment is on community-based care. As such, admissions to the NDSH traditional services unit have decreased from 1,221 admissions in 1997 to 897 admissions in 2012. The NDSH traditional services unit's average daily population has decreased from 289 patients in 1997 to 104 patients in 2012.

At the same time, acuity levels of patients at the NDSH have increased. For example, the current addiction patients have severe, chronic medical problems, and the psychiatric patients have multiple diagnoses. There are five key patient groups who are consistently served in the NDSH due to communities finding difficulty successfully treating them: nursing home

residents with significant behavioral problems; group home residents with developmental disabilities or traumatic brain injuries with behavioral issues; people who are violent and admitted for forensic services; community-based sex offenders with mental health and substance abuse problems, and people who have serious and chronic mental illness and substance abuse and a high recidivism rate.

The NDSH's growth since 1997 has been in forensic services with the evaluation and treatment of sex offenders and the treatment of addiction clients from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) in the Tompkins Rehabilitation and Corrections Center (TRCC) at the NDSH.

The NDSH provides two types of forensic services. The first service is alcohol and drug treatment for offenders from the DOCR who are treated in the TRCC. This program is a residential addiction treatment program. The NDSH serves 60 male residents and 30 female residents in this program. The average daily population is 86. The second forensic service is the evaluation and treatment services program for sex offenders. This is a residential treatment program for high risk sex offenders housed and treated in the secure services unit of the NDSH. The NDSH operates 76 beds in the secure services unit, and at the end of 2012 had an occupancy of 65 patients. Nineteen patients have been discharged from the program by court order since 1997.

Utilization of Campus and Buildings:

The NDSH and the James River Correctional Center (JRCC) have shared the campus since 1998. This has been a positive and effective use of this

property. The JRCC occupied several previously empty and underutilized buildings on the NDSH campus at that time and remains in that space today.

The NDSH is currently utilizing two buildings and campus housing for the evaluation and treatment of the NDSH traditional patient population: the LaHaug Building and the New Horizons Building.

The LaHaug Building has 135,500 square feet and is utilized fully in the treatment of adults who receive psychiatric and substance abuse services. This building also contains the NDSH clinic, pharmacy, lab and X-ray, staff offices and recreational and treatment areas. The New Horizons Building has 75,498 square feet and is utilized fully as the Adult Psychiatric Services treatment mall.

The NDSH is utilizing two other buildings and campus housing for the evaluation and treatment of the adult forensic population: the GM Building and the Tompkins Rehabilitation and Corrections Center Building.

The GM Building, which has 82,670 square feet, is utilized for the evaluation and treatment of sex offenders in the secure services unit. The building is fully utilized for treatment, recreational, dining and vocational programs for sex offenders. The TRCC building which, has 34,660 square feet, is fully utilized for treatment, dining, recreational and vocational programs for addiction patients.

The NDSH also has seven campus houses which were originally constructed to accommodate on-site facility doctors. All of these houses are currently utilized with one of them being used for the Community Sex Offender Transition Center, three are used to house UND addiction and psychiatric

students or physicians, two are used as Transitional Living Homes, and one of the houses is leased to the Head Start Program.

The NDSH is utilizing one building for administration and support services. The Learning Resource Center is a four-story building, has 40,800 square feet, and is fully occupied. First floor has the NDSH's main street concept, where a patient library, a patient snack shop, and the patient volunteer program is located. Second floor contains the administrative offices for the NDSH. Third floor contains the patient and staff educational department and the technology equipment to provide telehealth education and support court hearings. Fourth floor contains the NDSH's museum, the accounts receivable department, and space that is leased to the Protection and Advocacy project.

The NDSH operates the boiler plant for the entire campus, and we have several buildings that contain materials, goods, and equipment to manage the infrastructure of the campus.

The following buildings are partially utilized or empty on the campus: the 16 West Building, Old Administration Building, Superintendent's House, and Employee Building.

The 16 West building is a four-story building containing 39,990 square feet. Three floors are empty, and first floor is utilized by the plant operations department of the NDSH. The Old Administration Building is empty and would only be used for an evacuation site in case of a natural disaster in the community or surrounding area. The Superintendent's House is empty, but is utilized for rental to the community for special events. The Employees building, which has 34,345 square feet, is utilized for rental to employees for the NDSH and the JRCC.

Utilization of State Owned Land:

The NDSH leases out 1,183 acres of tillable land and 1284 acres of land for pasture, hay, and alfalfa. The NDSH also has 90 acres for the Centennial Forest and 73 acres for the NDSH's cemetery and lagoons. The land area of the campus and directly adjacent to the campus contains 430 acres of land. The total of state-owned land managed by the NDSH is 3,060 acres.

Rental of Building Space:

The NDSH rents to the Head Start program in one of the campus houses, a small storage garage to an employee and to the Protection and Advocacy project in the Learning Resource Building.

Recommendations:

1. Utilize the campus in the most efficient and effective way possible.
2. Increase the number of outside agencies utilizing underutilized or empty space on the campus.
3. Continue to partner with the JRCC in the utilization of the campus.
4. Achieve a long-range goal of having the Adult Psychiatric Services in one building to realize staffing and program efficiencies and effectiveness.

I would be happy to answer any questions.