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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE ANNOUNCES
CLOSURE OF MAYVIEW STATE HOSPITAL**

Savings to be Reinvested in Community-Based Programs Serving Those in Need

HARRISBURG – Department of Public Welfare Secretary Estelle B. Richman today announced plans to close the clinical services of the civil section of Mayview State Hospital in Allegheny County by Dec. 31, 2008.

Richman said the closure is part of Pennsylvania’s commitment to reducing its reliance on institutional care and improving access to home and community-based services for Pennsylvanians living with mental illness.

“Over the past two years, we have worked with our county partners on a plan that will allow us to further develop and enhance community services to support those leaving the state hospital for life in the community,” said Richman. “For more than 25 years, Pennsylvania has been on the leading edge of developing local partnerships and community based service options that promote recovery for people living with mental illness.”

The closure of Mayview is part of the department’s plan to create a more unified approach to funding community services and supports for those living with mental illness. The department will reinvest the millions-of-dollars saved to further develop and sustain clinically-based, recovery-oriented services and to continue to improve the mental health service delivery system.

In addition, DPW is exploring the consolidation and privatization of forensic services currently provided by the state hospital system. The department will issue a request for proposals to explore creating two, privately run, regionally based forensic facilities located on the campus of Norristown State Hospital in eastern Pennsylvania and on the campus of Torrance State Hospital in western Pennsylvania.

The resident population at Pennsylvania's eight state hospitals has decreased by nearly 60 percent, from 4,934 in 1994 to 1,927 as of June 2007.

Mayview State Hospital currently serves 225 residents at its 335 acre campus, with a staff of approximately 502 people and a current operating budget of \$63 million. The hospital currently serves Allegheny, Beaver, Lawrence, Greene and Washington counties.

The department will work to provide hospital staff viable employment opportunities at other state-operated facilities or with new or existing community programs.

Prior to being discharged, individuals will participate in a series of assessments in order to determine their level of need for services and support as they look toward a successful life within a more integrated setting, such as a group home, public housing or with family. The assessment process will ensure that both safe and appropriate placements are made.

The department has created a strong community advisory team made up of Mayview residents, county representatives from the Mayview service area, as well as other interested stakeholders who will monitor and assist the department through the closure process.

DPW will hold a public hearing from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Sept. 10 at the Crowne Plaza Pittsburgh South, 164 Fort Couch Road, Bethel Park, to accept comment about the closure from stakeholders, officials and the community. Those wishing to provide comments are asked to register by contacting Dorothy Owens at 412-257-6200 or dowens@state.pa.us.

Mayview State Hospital was originally opened and received its first resident as “Marshalsea” by the City of Pittsburgh in 1893. The department assumed responsibility for the facility in 1941 and began providing care to approximately 4,200 residents.

For more information regarding the closure, visit www.dpw.state.pa.us. DPW has also established a toll-free number for family members of residents of Mayview State Hospital to use during the closure process. Family members will be able to speak with staff from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling (877) 514-6349.

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The Department of Public Welfare helps people meet their basic needs by providing health care and other critical support services for children, the elderly, people with chronic diseases, persons with disabilities and low income families and adults in Pennsylvania. DPW is dedicated to promoting, improving, and sustaining the quality of family life; breaking the cycle of dependency while protecting and serving Pennsylvania's most vulnerable citizens. Visit DPW on the Internet at: www.dpw.state.pa.us.