



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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February 9, 2007

TO: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley   
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – HOUSE OF  
BETHESDA GROUP HOME**

We have completed a review of House of Bethesda Group Home (Group Home or Agency). House of Bethesda Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

House of Bethesda Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 13-17 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, House of Bethesda Group Home was providing services for one DCFS child, and five Probation children.

House of Bethesda Group Home is located in the Second District.

**Scope of Review**

The purpose of the review is to determine whether the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covers basic child safety and licensing issues and includes an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with children placed in the Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with children are designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

### **Summary of Findings**

Generally, the Agency is providing the services as outlined in their Program Statement. The Agency needs to address several deficient areas.

House of Bethesda Group Home needs to clean the living room and hallway walls; replace the shower curtain, repair the window screen, and clean the ceiling in the bathroom; replace the comforters on all children's beds; remove the writing from the wall in bedroom one; repair the carpet in bedrooms two and three; include the treatment team and the child in the development and implementation of the Needs and Services Plans; maintain comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that include short and long term goals; and provide all children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

Attached is a detailed report of the review.

### **Review of Report**

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. In response to the recommendations made in the report, the Agency's management completed a corrective action plan (attached) which we approved. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo at (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:gfw

[http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group\\_home.asp](http://auditor.co.la.ca.us/group_home.asp)

### **Attachments**

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Patricia S. Ploehn, Director, DCFS  
Robert B. Taylor, Chief Probation Officer  
Robert E. Smith, Executive Director, House of Bethesda  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**House of Bethesda  
14614 Firmona Avenue  
Lawndale, California 90260  
Phone: (310) 675-1444  
License Number: 191601689  
Rate Classification Level: 10**

## **I. Facility and Environment**

### **Method of assessment – Observation**

#### **Comments:**

House of Bethesda Group Home is located in a residential community. The exterior of the Group Home is well maintained. The front and back yards are clean and adequately landscaped.

Overall, the interior of the Group Home is adequately maintained. The common quarters are neat. There is adequate furniture and lighting in the group home. The Group Home provides a home-like environment. However, the living room and hallway walls are dirty. In the bathroom, the shower curtain is stained with rust, the window screen is torn, and there is mildew on the ceiling.

Overall, children's bedrooms are well maintained. The rooms are clean and orderly and have age-appropriate personalized decorations. There is adequate lighting and storage space. Window coverings and window screens are in good repair. The mattresses are comfortable and the beds all have a full complement of linens. However, the comforters on the beds are worn and stained. In bedroom one there is writing on the wall. In bedrooms two and three the carpet is damaged. Children's sleeping arrangements are appropriate.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a DVD player. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

The Group Home maintains a sufficient supply of perishable and non perishable foods.

### **Recommendations**

- 1. House of Bethesda management:**
  - a. Clean the living room and hallway walls.**
  - b. Replace the bathroom shower curtain.**
  - c. Repair the bathroom window screen.**

- d. Clean the bathroom ceiling.
- e. Replace the bedroom comforters.
- f. Remove the writing from the wall in bedroom one.
- g. Repair the carpet in bedrooms two and three.

## **II. Program Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

**Comments:**

Children meet the Group Home’s population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Children are assessed for needed services within thirty days of placement.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) are current. However, the Needs and Services Plans are not developed or implemented by the treatment team and do not include input from the child. The NSPs are not comprehensive and do not include short and long term goals.

Case files reflect adequate documentation to show that children are receiving treatment services.

### **Recommendations**

#### **2. House of Bethesda management:**

- a. Include the treatment team and input from the child in the development and implementation of the NSPs.
- b. Maintain comprehensive Needs and Services Plans that are measurable, attainable, and include short and long term goals.

## **III. Educational and Emancipation Services**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

**Comments:**

Children are attending school. Children are provided with educational support and

resources to meet their educational needs and are progressing satisfactorily in school. The Group Home's program includes the development of children's daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Children are provided with opportunities to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**IV. Recreation and Activities**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

**Comments:**

The Group Home provides children with sufficient recreational activities and leisure time. Children are provided with opportunities to participate in planning activities.

Children participate in extra-curricular, enrichment, and social activities in which they have an interest.

The Group Home provides transportation to and from the activities.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

**V. Psychotropic Medication**

**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents**

**Comments:**

According to the Agency's management, there are currently no children taking psychotropic medications. This information is appropriately documented.

Children are aware of their right to refuse medication.

**Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **VI. Personal Rights**

### **Method of assessment – Interviews with children**

**Sample size: Two**

#### **Comments:**

Children are informed about the Group Home's policies and procedures. Children report that they feel safe in the Group Home and are provided with appropriate staff supervision. Children expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with staff and report that staff treats them with respect and dignity.

Children report that they are assigned chores that are reasonable and not too demanding. Children are able to make and receive personal telephone calls, send and receive unopened mail, and have private visitors. Children are able to attend religious services of their choice.

Children report that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Children report satisfaction with meals and snacks.

Children receive voluntary medical, dental, and psychiatric care.

### **Recommendations**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

## **VII. Clothing and Allowance**

### **Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and interviews**

**Sample size: Two**

#### **Comments:**

The Group Home provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance to children. Children are provided with opportunities to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to children is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

Children spend their allowances as they choose. However, the Group Home does not provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.

The Group Home provides children with adequate personal care items.

Children are encouraged and assisted in creating and maintaining photo albums/life books.

**Recommendation**

- 3. House of Bethesda management provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance.**

**THE HOUSE OF BETHESDA HOME FOR BOYS, INC.**

14614 Firmona Avenue\* Lawndale, CA 90260  
(310) 675-1444; (310) 675-1333

June 21, 2006

**CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN-ADDENDUM**

Dear Ms. Walters:

The following is an addendum to the most recent Corrected Action Plan. To reiterate, items A-G will be reviewed once a week by the facility manager and held in discussion with the executive director during their weekly held meeting.

Subsequent to the initial Corrective Action Plan, the following items have been added:

- 1) The Facility Manager will monitor the structure of the facility and will note any needed repair and make arrangements for such repairs on a weekly basis. In addition, the licensee will ensure that such action is carried out during the weekly held meetings between himself and the facility manager.
- 2) The facility will ensure that each resident will receive the stipulated weekly monetary allowance. The allowance will be documented in the appropriate ledger and signed-off by the executive director as confirmation.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Robert E. Smith*

Robert E. Smith  
Licensee