

MEMORANDUM

To: All OGC Families, Staff and Volunteers
From: Kyle Hauth, Executive Director
Subject: **OGC Update**
Date: February 1, 2008

If there ever was a time for you to become personally acquainted with your State Senator and State Representative, now is the time. Unless some political pressure can be brought to bear on the Tennessee Division of Mental Retardation Services (DMRS), we will experience a 6.1% cut in our main funding which will leave us no option than to begin making cuts in our services. The reason given for this sudden and unprecedented decrease in the middle of a fiscal year is a notable deficiency between the demand for home and community-based related expenditures and available funding from state and federal sources. Essentially, what has happened is the State overextended itself with contract and service obligations and now intends to balance its budget by taking the funds from community agencies. Obviously, the State run developmental centers will not experience a reduction in their funding nor is it likely that they will even make substantial cuts. I strongly urge you to contact your State Senator and State Representative and voice your displeasure with this action.

I do not necessarily disagree with DMRS taking cost containment measures, but it is unreasonable to cut the programs that are running in a cost effective manner. The average daily cost to support one person at a state facility is \$874.65, according to the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury. Community agencies support people at a fraction of the cost of a state institution. According to a letter from DMRS on December 6, 2007, the average daily cost for a community agency to serve one person in October 2007 was \$233.00. However the Orange Grove Center's average daily cost for people funded through DMRS is \$73.14. You may learn more about this subject by going to www.preventdmrscuts.com or you may call or write me for additional information. I'll be happy to supply you with sample letters, names and addresses of legislators and various articles that have been written on this subject.

In addition to the payment reductions that are taking place, DMRS is also arbitrarily lowering level of need classification of many people we serve. Each time we are notified that a level of need has changed, we are evaluating the changes and submitting an appeal, if we feel that the change is inconsistent with the person's need. It is imperative that family members of the people we serve alert us to any communication they may receive from DMRS or TennCare. If we are not informed of the situation, it may be too late to intervene once we learn of the change in services.

The Orange Grove Capital Campaign is now well under way. Gene Stallings gave us a great kickoff event on January 7th and we are now moving forward with our solicitations. We intend to raise a minimum of \$4,775,000.00 for facility renovations and improvements as well as the development of new services for the future needs of our population. Please visit our website at www.orangegrovecenter.org to learn all about how the funds will be used to assist us in our mission and see the newest campaign video that puts the whole process into perspective. With the leadership of our Board Treasurer, Mr. Tom Cox, there are now many ways family members, staff, volunteers and interested individuals can get involved in this effort. We can now easily build you a personalized website where you can easily solicit your family and friends to contribute toward your personal goal to assist Orange Grove. This is just another fun and interactive way people can get engaged in our campaign. Please call me today, if you would like to assist in this vital effort.

After 37 years of faithful service to the Orange Grove Center, Fred Galletta, OGC Director of Education and Training, will be retiring on February 29th. Come join us at 1:30 p.m. on February 29th in the Hab Center Training Room as we bid farewell to Fred. You are welcome to share your fond memories of Fred's leadership and involvement in our programs and services. Please RSVP by calling 493-2911. With Fred leaving us, it was necessary to make some changes in our organizational structure to accommodate for his departure. Please note the Revised Organizational Chart shown below for a full breakdown of each department's line of authority.

We have added a weather alert line to ensure that everyone knows the status of our transportation routes in the event of inclement weather. Feel free to dial 308-1161 anytime you question whether or not our transportation services may be running behind due to weather conditions. We have also started using our website (first page that loads) for another means of communicating this vital information. We will continue to

attempt notification through the local media as well, but for the most accurate information we request that you dial our alert line or go to www.orangegrovecenter.org www.

Thank you for your attention in these matters.