Illness turns life of family from Hobbs upside down

Boy's rare neurological condition produces 'scary' behavior swings

A family's story

Alma Olivas-Posadas/NEWS-SUN

A case of autoimmune encephalitis, a rare neurological disease causing antibodies and inflammation in the brain, has changed the life of a Hobbs family.

Juan Hernandez Jr., 11, or as his mother says, "Juanny" started having behavior changes in late March, something his mother Priscilla Rosas at first thought was something normal.

As days passed, Rosas said her son's behavior started getting stranger and he developed seizures.

Rosas remembers her son started replacing words in his speech and his behavior started to get unpredictable. He was having a hard time being able to grasp and hold objects and started to get aggressive.

One afternoon, Juanny went to sleep and wouldn't wake up. He was taken to Lea Regional Medical Center and, according to Rosas, it was the start of many trips to the emergency room in Hobbs and hospital stays in Lubbock.

"He was scared, very paranoid, he just said he was scared and he couldn't explain it," Rosas said. "He just had a horrible sense of fear."

Rosas said there was one time when her 11-year-old son got so violent a neighbor had to call the police because they feared there was something wrong. Rosas said her three younger children were scared during these episodes.

"They were scared, we were all scared even since he had that first seizure," Rosas said. "I never went to sleep... I was afraid if I was asleep... What if he woke up and hurt all the other kids... it has been scary. It had been horribly, horribly scary."

After numerous visits to the doctor and with her son's health worsening, Rosas said a spinal tap was performed and revealed he was building antibodies in his brain. He was transported to Children's Medical Center in Dallas, where he spent several weeks in the intensive care unit and lost the ability to speak, walk and eat on his own.

Donna Graves, a neurologist at the city, Rosas said, noting that any such facilities will have required emergency vehicle parking and meet other safety standards.

The approval resolution now gives the city guidelines to give companies who want to bring in industrial or "temporary" worker housing facilities to help address a critical shortage of housing in Hobbs. The city defines an "industrial worker housing facility" as "any housing facility or camp type facility or building designed to provide rental housing, food and other living services for energy sector workers, regardless if the worker's duration is temporary or permanent, or if the facility is temporary or permanent in nature."

More specifically, "temporary" is considered and designated to be located at a site for a period of less than 12 months.

"Most of the industrial worker housing facilities will be located in highly industrialized areas rather than in residential areas, but we will still get input from residents who may live in these areas," he said.

Robinson also said the facilities will be designed for single industries, but not for single companies. For example,

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Economy in Hobbs breaking records

FOR THE NEWS-SUN

Hobbs commerce shattered all-time sales records again in March, resulting in the highest gross receipts tax displacement in history to the City of Hobbs in May.

In May, the City of Hobbs received a check for $8.3 million for the state gross receipts tax disbursement for March. N.M. Taxation and Revenue Department reported nearly $620 million in business activity took place in Hobbs in March.

"That's a million dollars more than last month's distribution and a million and a half ahead of this same time last year," said Hobbs Chamber CEO Grant Taylor, referring to April 2012's gross receipts tax check of $6.3 million and May's check of $4.4 million.

The second-highest distribution to date, $7.75 million, was received in January of this year.

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