

The New York Times.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1965.

STATE STUDY ASKS 150 LOCAL CENTERS FOR MENTALLY ILL

30 Units for Retarded Also Urged on the Governor in a Massive Report

By JOHN SIBLEY

A master plan for the care of the state's mentally ill and retarded, handed to Governor Rockefeller over the weekend, calls for developing a network of small community centers.

By 1975, according to the plan, there would be 150 mental health centers across the state, each serving a population of about 150,000. Except in New York City, these would be administered by county or regional governing boards.

In addition, 30 community centers for the mentally retarded would be established during the same period at easily accessible points, each serving a population of no more than 750,000.

More than 800 experts and private citizens worked two years in the preparation of the report, a seven-volume work containing 1,615 pages.

Follows Kennedy Report

The vast study was directed by Hyman M. Forestenzer, an assistant commissioner of the Department of Mental Hygiene, who is in charge of mental health resources and policy planning.

The report was made public less than a week after Senator Robert F. Kennedy touched off an uproar by charging that the state was disgracefully neglecting the needs of its mentally retarded children.

The department insisted yesterday, however, that the report had not been timed deliberately to offset the Kennedy charge. A spokesman said the release date had been set long before the Senator issued a strongly phrased description of his findings at two institutions for mentally defective children.

Main Concept Endorsed

The report contained few surprises for mental health authorities, though it listed 83 "major recommendations" in the field of mental health and 191 more in the field of mental retardation.

The underlying concept—caring for the mentally disabled close to their homes rather than in isolated, giant institutions—is endorsed today by virtually all experts. Governor Rockefeller, though he spoke in general terms, announced last January that this policy would be followed in building new mental hospitals.

Mr. Forestenzer noted yesterday that a number of the other major recommendations had been enacted into law by the 1965 Legislature. Among them were these:

• A program under which the

Continued on Page 39, Column 7

LATE CITY EDITION

U. S. Weather Bureau Report (Page 69) forecasts:
Rain ending, clearing today; fair tonight. Fair and warm tomorrow.
Temp. (Range): 74-60; yesterday: 65-61;
Temp.-Hum. Index: high 60's; yesterday: 64.

Years considered her career last night. She had just made the rounds of several wards in a building about midnight.

These were wards for girls. Apart from a plaintive cry, the wards were very quiet. On a night table in the corner were piles of nightgowns, since the bulk of the patients in this building, regardless of age, often wet their beds in their sleep.

In a room, neatly arranged, were the clothes to be worn in the morning by the patients. Each dress had the name of a patient. As the gray-haired supervisor left the last ward, she stood in the hallway for a few moments, fingering the keys with which she had locked every door as she left.

"When I came here 30 years ago," she said softly, "they would never have allowed more than 50 patients in that ward. Those are the most severely retarded female patients we have. Now that ward has 98 patients. Why do people work here? I have never known anyone who worked here for any length of time who did not eventually say: 'there's some good in every one of them.'"

The director of the school, Dr. Charles Greenburgh, who has been here since 1957 and in the State Department of Mental Hygiene for 34 years, does not try to conceal the fact that overcrowding has made it so difficult to maintain cleanliness and the high standards of efficiency today.

"I would be very happy if I had 1,000 less patients," he said. "But where are we going to place them. Am I going to say: 'No more admissions until we can cope with what we have?'"

"We are being flooded more and more with the severely retarded. Parents are less likely today to keep such retarded children in the home as long as they used to. They still feel guilty about bringing them here. But they now know how much harm it can do to their other children if they keep them at home."

Educables Trained for Jobs

Life in this school begins about 5:30 A.M., when nurses turn on lights in the wards and awaken patients. Those who are ambulatory and can dress themselves do so and help others.

Breakfast in dining rooms is well under way at 7:30, with attendants putting food on trays in accordance with an over-all formula worked out by the department in Albany. At this and other meals, food for those adult retardates without teeth is mashed.

During the week those patients who are considered educable are taken to unusual classrooms in a new building.

One of these classrooms—and all are light and airy—is an attractively furnished apartment of dining room, bedroom, and a kitchen equipped with four electric stoves, five sinks, cupboards, two refrigerators and a dishwasher. In this room girls are taught to care for an apartment.

This is one step preparing

had an argument with my boss, has repeatedly been ordered to be lost.

PROSE AND CONSIDERING COSTS TO 100,000 SALES IN A YEAR. (REPRINTED FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES)

New York Times

September 13, 1965

NEW YORK TIMES
SEP 13 1965