

DAILY NEWS



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FINAL

Plan Big Mental Care Hike

Albany, Sept. 13 (AP)—A state study committee unveiled today a plan designed to expand the care and treatment of New York's mentally ill and retarded by about 40% in the next 10 years.

The program calls for development by 1975 of 150 community mental health centers to be administered—except in New York City—by county or regional governing boards. In New York City, the program would be controlled by the Community Mental Health Board and the city's Department of Mental Health.

The wide-ranging report by the New York State Committee on Mental Disorders was handed to Gov. Rockefeller and made public less than a week after Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.) sharply criticized conditions at two State schools for the mentally retarded.

Compared to a Zoo

He told a legislative hearing last Thursday that he had seen some patients at Rome and

Staten Island institutions who were worse off "than animals in a zoo."

Among the report's major recommendations are proposals that would:

- Establish, by 1975, community mental retardation centers at each of 30 easily accessible points throughout the state, with no center to serve a population of more than 750,000.
- Initiate, by 1967, some form of cost-sharing program under which the counties and other local agencies and individuals, families and voluntary associations would share with the state and federal governments the expenses of state-operated hospitals.
- Place a limit of 1,000 patients on the capacity of any new state hospital and, where possible,

locate new hospitals close to medical schools' and university teaching centers.

● Authorize the Mental Hygiene Facilities Improvement Fund to issue bonds to finance and construct mental health and mental retardation facilities.

● Construct state hospitals and auxiliary facilities for treatment of emotionally disturbed children.

Demand Better Staff At Willowbrook

By JACK MALLON

Branding conditions at Willowbrook State School for the retarded on Staten Island as "an affront to human dignity," a parents association yesterday de-

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Mental Care Hikes Sought

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manded that the state employ emergency funds to improve the staff.

At the same time, District Attorney John Braisted of Staten Island was given an eyewitness account by the mother of a pupil who said she saw an attendant beat five boys on the heads with a club at the school last Monday.

In another development, a Staten Island grand jury is probing several reportedly "unnatural" deaths at Willowbrook, including the death of Henry Harper by scalding, first revealed last spring by THE NEWS.

"We once more demand immediate correction of the shocking conditions," Mrs. Shirley L. Epstein of Jamaica, Queens, president of the Benevolent Society for Retarded Children, said in a telegram to Gov. Rockefeller.