

The program is designed to offer these residents counseling and psychotherapy and suitable means of coping with their environment. To this end — in addition to specialized ward personnel — educators, recreational personnel, psychologists and social workers are heavily utilized.

A program also was designed for profoundly and severely retarded adolescents called GARD (Group Approaches to Rehabilitation and Development) in which a ward of 68 adolescents was broken up into four equal groups, and each group was led by a specially trained attendant-counselor. This program was beginning to show signs of fruition but, unfortunately, it had to be dropped because of a growing shortage of ward personnel due to the budget freeze.

The attendants have begun many programs on their own initiative. In Building 7, employees have developed a team approach to patient care with the large ward census divided into smaller, more manageable groups to which employees can

give individual attention.

Several programs are available to our adult population. There is a specialized young adult education program which is oriented toward developing pre-vocational and vocational skills. We have also devised a highly individualized and specialized program for adults called TACL (Training Adults for Community Living).

TACL was created to prepare any and all adults at Willowbrook who might be capable of living and supporting themselves in the community for such community residence. To this end, a separate TACL unit for males and a separate unit for females was created.

In this program resident self government is emphasized, as is the acquisition of vocational skills, either by referral to specialized agencies in the community, such as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, or by work training in various jobs on the grounds.

In addition, the trainees in his program are given preventive counseling and psychotherapy, designed to help them anticipate and deal with the kinds of problems that they might be expected to encounter in community living. The males also are taught simple household repair, while the females undergo an extensive program of home economics.

For those individuals who are placed in the community, a very active program of follow up assistance is offered, including a group counseling and recreation program for a group of older residents who are in the community, having been placed there on Family Care.

These are the specialized programs at Willowbrook and other specialized projects have been developed to alleviate specific conditions, such as headbandaging. These programs, however, are in addition to those regular, on-going programs that our facility offers as a matter of course.

Thus, nearly every resident on the grounds participates in program of recreation, and the overwhelming majority of residents participate either in an on-going program of occupational therapy or education. In the latter area, we have three Edison Responsive Environments ("talking typewriters") and specialized classes for the retarded who are deaf and hard of hearing or blind and partially sighted are conducted.

Further, a psychological evaluation and assessment of each resident is made, and this often is done on a continuing basis. Some of the residents are seen for individual and group counseling and psychotherapy, and an active program of Family Care is pursued.

Regularly scheduled interdisciplinary meetings are held, and new programs are encouraged. A two-way feedback system on this is stimulated by an employe newspaper. Active programs of in-service training and education are carried out with all of the various disciplines, including personnel on the community.

Having made that assessment of the work being done at Willowbrook, the committee concluded, "We do not deny that we need help, but we ask for constructive help.

"You can help by visiting Willowbrook. Then if you feel the conditions are as deplorable as has been painted by a few, fight to have Willowbrook closed and the offenders prosecuted.

"If you find, as we feel you will, there are good things in addition to those which could be improved, then let your legislator know that you will not stand for the distortions of the situation."

But the group added that "the governor must readjust his priorities. He must, and the people must, realize that the children of Willowbrook are more important than the Grand Mall in Albany and the construction of more roads."

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