

The State has a ceiling on the amount of food a family may order within a month and deducts the cost from their salaries - as is also done with their rents.

Ernest Palscic, Business Administrator, explains the ordering procedure. "Each family or individual orders their food and the food order for the institution is placed as one order."

There is no separate order placed for residents and staff. Palscic is quick to caution that a very accurate system of inventory and control keeps the food orders within regulations.

Roast Beef is ordered at a yearly rate of over 8,000 lbs. and is calculated on the monthly usage.

The Chief Dietician stated that they must maintain an inventory of one month in advance, however, the cook with us on the tour said that after the weekend they would not be much left in the storeroom.

Seven women from building 32 (a borderline area) are employed as housekeepers by administrative staff. The reported salary is \$5 a month. To date the case of one of these ladies Mary Bruno is before the courts.

Mary Bruno wants to leave Willowbrook and her father says no. He is willing to go to court to keep her there.

THE BUSINESS OF WILLOWBROOK

The Department of Mental Hygiene is the largest economic supporter of the State Prison system. All clothes that bear the institutional label are made by prisoners. Willowbrook uses the prison made detergent that sells at 12½ cents a pound. The State recently changed from the cheaper soap at 5½ cents a pound - all made by prisoners.

A large sum of the \$18,764 spent by Willowbrook for transportation goes for tolls. The clothing allowance for the school is \$371,789, most of which goes back to the state. Medicaid payments to the schools by the state, totals at \$522,049 and to the city an additional \$236,000 is paid for water. This is the first year that Willowbrook has had to pay for water. However, the money is not allocated in the budget.

Willowbrook pays \$79,824 for communications. This bill is the combined phone usage for the school, Institute for Basic Research in Mental Retardation at Willowbrook and Gouverneur, the Manhattan hospital for 200 non-ambulatory patients - known as the Willowbrook Center.

COMPANY STORE

A system of stores, operated by the state, provide a variety of products for state institutions. It is here that residents, staff and visitors may purchase the personal and gift items at prices regulated by the local institution - it has a virtual monopoly on patient business.

Willowbrook's Community Store employs 7 people. The store manager, Mrs. Dorothy Menza, is paid \$8,942 annually. Profits from the store are intended for the benefit of the resident and staff.

Spending of the profits is controlled by the Department of the Budget. Permission is usually granted to spend money for parties, Christmas gifts for residents without relatives and to supply home-made ice cream for a tasty-freeze truck which was donated to the school and is operated, free of charge, for the residents.

CREDIT UNION:

A notice posted in the laundry reminds the employee to apply for payroll deduction - "just a small \$5 will start a savings account." Palscic speaks highly of the state operated payroll deduction system. An interest of 6% is paid to depositors and, for those with deposits up to \$2,000, a free life insurance policy is given depending on age and savings.

To further aid the employee a credit union was established eight years ago under the direction of Palscic, president for the past eight years.

The credit union is regulated by the federal government and for the most part has been rather successful.

To date the membership is 1,502 with \$329,204.30 in loans since 1964. The assets have risen to \$519,626.86.

The credit union pays out approximately \$550 a month for insurance and an additional \$420 a month for the computer system in Baltimore which is used to handle union affairs.

There are three committees which regulate the credit union in addition to the five member executive board.

VOLUNTEERS:

Mrs. Elizabeth Hammond, wife of the director, heads the office of Volunteer Service. Mrs. Hammond, before coming to Willowbrook, started and co-ordinated volunteer programs in two other institutions.

Mrs. Hammond, a salaried Psychiatric Nurse and Boy Scout Master, initiated the volunteer program at Willowbrook. In 1971, a total of 37,382 hours have been recorded by individual volunteers (about 7 hours and 40 minutes per patient)... with groups compiling an impressive total of 18,999¼ hours.

Volunteers are used in every area of service for the institution.

Most of the volunteers serve in the baby buildings helping attendants with the changing of diapers and playing with the children. College students often work in the psychology department.

as others help in Occupational Therapy and in the school.

It is not uncommon to find volunteers answering office phones, repairing toys; decorating wards and sewing classes which sorely need repairing.

Money donated is used for playground equipment, hospital equipment and for gifts at Christmas time.

THE MEDICAL MODEL

Willowbrook, as are all New York State Schools, is run by doctors - psychologists, psychiatrists, analysts, physicians and consultants.

A building doctor makes the final decision concerning the status of a resident.

Teachers and lay-personnel are not allowed to question the authority of the doctor. Often, a resident who is transferred from a locked building to an advanced building goes through a period of adjustment.

The doctor can prescribe medication if it is reported that the resident is "acting out" or seems unmanageable.

The social worker is confined to making evaluations for family-care and community living. Yet, the nine social workers have only been able to place 96 residents in family-care. Based on their reports, many more residents can qualify for the various outside programs but will never be reached by them or the psychiatrists.

Dr. Sternlicht heads the habilitation department. It is here that programs for advancing the educable and trainable are molded. Essential to this department are the 5 psychiatrists who are responsible for applying the IQ tests. The Occupational Therapy instructors do the initial evaluations and make their reports to the doctors.

Here again there is a strain between the instructors and doctors. The doctors seldom consult personally with the instructors at the training site. The outcome is that very few residents receive a complete evaluation.

One instructor tells of how it took 2 years to get a pair of glasses for a student in his OT class. The boy has the habit of picking up everything he sees and eating it. The doctor would not okay the glasses for this reason.

The instructor felt that the glasses would enable the child to use his spare time constructively, as he showed a positive response to training and he could perhaps learn to differentiate between edible and non-edible materials. Finally after the instructor personally assumed responsibility for the glasses, they were issued.

The administration has not moved on the request for eye glasses with magnetic lenses for the many residents who are legally blind.

Attendants are quick to respond to suggestions of applying some additional therapy in the ward for students who show positive response in OT classes.

"We are too busy," cries the attendant in staff meetings. "We have to mop floors and bathe too many to spend time with them in therapy."

These reports go constantly to the administration. The doctors are quick to remind that they are in authority.

Psychiatric attendants total 1,993. This number is the combination of grades 6 to 8.

The head supervisors over attendants are nurses. Whenever an attendant has a problem which must go past the building they have to report to one of the nurse supervisors.

The medical concept is the rule at Willowbrook. Attendants, for the most part, are not medically trained. When critical decisions must be made, the attendant must step back giving way to the doctor and nurse.

Miss Barbara Wright testified before the SPCC panel concerning the death of a patient in building 14. Miss Wright felt that the nurse should answer questions concerning the child's death.

When a grievance hearing was finally held, the nurse, Mrs. Barton, was represented by the supervisor of female attendants, Mrs. Marie Salvatore, Miss Wright's ultimate supervisor. Miss Wright was never allowed to enter her charges because they were over-looked and turned around to read that she was actually concerned with her change of shift.

Mrs. Salvatore ruled in favor of her change of shift, as her supervisor, and ruled in favor of Mrs. Barton's action because of her position as a nurse.

Attendants are often called on to perform the task of the LPN, i.e., giving medication, changing bandages, giving shots. However, the attendant is at no time recognized by the administration as an authority on the care of the resident.

The lines of authority are clearly drawn between medical administrator, medical personnel and custodial personnel - but lines of job function and responsibility are arbitrarily altered by medical and administrative personnel.

Staten Island Register

Page 2 of 2 pages

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