

## New Plan To Aid the Retarded

By BARBARA YUNCKER

A plan to get 1000 patients out of Willowbrook State School and to ease other crisis points in the care of the mentally retarded has been drafted by the State Dept. of Mental Hygiene.

It will require the Legislature's adding \$16 million to the Department's \$460 million budget for the coming fiscal year.

Commissioner of Mental Hygiene Alan D. Miller confirmed he had prepared such a memo for legislative leaders and the Division of the Budget after recent publicity about overcrowding and understaffing at the Staten Island institution and other state new units in "vacated or vacated schools for the retarded.

"We were asked how much it would take to make a real difference in the next year," Miller said in an interview. "What this represents is by no means an ideal program, but it would eliminate a hell of a lot that is obscenely bad."

Three main steps would be involved:

¶ Four small new-style facilities which are ready but not scheduled to operate because there is no money for staff would be opened in New York City.

¶ Some long-term adult patients would be moved into better quarters by staffing new units in "vacated or vacatable good space" in state mental hospitals in the greater New York area.

¶ Staff would be added at the five large State Schools (Willowbrook, Wasaia, Letchworth Village, Rome and Newark) to bring them up to Medicaid standards. The state is now losing up to \$20 million a year in federal Medicaid funds because of the impact of the state job freeze.

The \$16 million is a phase-in figure for the fiscal year to start April 1. To maintain the improvements about \$32 million would have to be committed for the following year. This would be in addition to the \$20 million which Gov. Rockefeller restored to the budget.

If the funds are voted, these facilities will open:

¶ Sheridan, a former narcotics facility on Morton St. in Greenwich Village for 300 residents and additional day care patients.

¶ Williamsburg on S. Second St., Brooklyn, a renovated yeshiva which will have 80 residents and a larger number of day care patients.

¶ Kings County State School, 888 Fountain Av. in the Fresh Creek section of Brooklyn, which will have 750 residents in family-style apartment units for eight each, plus day care.

¶ Bernard Fineson Center, 37-10 114th St., Corona, Queens, which will be fully opened with a capacity of 200 residents plus day care in a renovated motel.