

New policy for retarded called vital

ALBANY (UPI) — New programs instead of more money are the answer to the problems in the state's mental hospitals, the chairman of the joint legislative committee on mental and physical handicaps said today.

Sen Dalwin J. Niles, R-Johnstown, made the statement after two days of public hearings in Albany at which 100 speakers testified on conditions at state schools and hospitals for the mentally ill and retarded.

"New York State's program for the mentally retarded has been moving in the wrong direction," Niles said. "A great many professionals and parents of retarded children testified that the main thrust of the state's care and treatment is not producing the results contemplated or desired.

"For the first time in memory, a legislative committee was told repeatedly it is not a question of more money to improve the needs of the retarded," Niles said.

"The treatment of retarded children and adults must be more closely allied to educational programs," he said. "It is evident that the next step in reducing the number of retarded citizens in our institutions is immediate implementation of learning programs which advance the level of productivity of individual patients."