

Mental patients fail to get services, Miller admits

Dr. Alan D. Miller, state commissioner of mental hygiene, estimated yesterday that three-fourths of all adults and one-third of all children in New York state mental institutions "are not getting services."

"We are failing and I'll take my share of the responsibility," said Miller, adding that adults comprise about 60 per cent of the 25,000 in mental institutions.

Miller also conceded that he was aware of instances where marginal patients were kept in institutions to assist the staff instead of being released.

"For many subtle reasons there are people who are allowed to stay in longer than necessary," Miller said. He

denied, however, that this practice represented "peonage" or was widespread.

Speaking in a televised interview Dr. Miller said a recent tour of Willowbrook State School on Staten Island by federal experts would most likely "lead to very few tangible outcomes."

"We worked on the outside chance something might have come from it," said Miller.

Miller commented that the care of "the mentally retarded light

in our institutions is still disgraceful. But I think we have made a lot of headway."

On the question of using prisoners to help in mental institutions, a theory advanced by State Sen. John E. Flynn, R-Yonkers, Miller said it warranted study. But he added that the individual prisoner in such a plan would have to be evaluated carefully.

Miller was interviewed on the WNBC-TC program "News-