

Says Bronx Lags in Care For Retarded

By LARRY COLE

Asserting that New York State's policy of caring for the retarded shortchanges Bronx residents, Dr. Jack M. Gootzeit, executive director of the Institute of Applied Human Dynamics, yesterday called for a seven-point program "to put the borough on a par with other areas of the state."

"As programs for other disability groups expand at a rapid rate, especially in the other boroughs, the people in the Bronx are becoming angrier that our children must still go to Willowbrook, stay without a program, or be faced with severe disrupting family problems," Gootzeit asserted.

His Program

Specifically, his seven-point program would focus on the following points:

- Overcoming delays in the opening of the new Bronx State School.

- Pre-school programs, especially in the poverty areas.

- A group home to be opened this year to hold and develop a small group residential facility in the community.

- A central register for informal exchange of patients between facilities when advisable and to insure referral follow up and individual responsibility.

- Vocational services for the Hunts Point area.

- Adult activities centers.

- Day care for the severely and profoundly handicapped of all ages.

40,000 Signatures

The last step is essential, Gootzeit noted, in order to "maintain individuals in the community on a lifetime basis."

Pointing out that more than 40,000 signatures had been collected on petitions urging the Legislature to provide better care for the mentally disabled, Gootzeit predicted the issue would heat up as more people became aware of the conditions that exist.

"The public outcry that erupted after the disclosure of the disgraceful conditions at the Willowbrook State School for the Mentally Handicapped will only grow in intensity," he forecast. "Our legislative delegation, our parents group and their friends intend to keep the 'No more Willowbrook' cry going and their anger will not stop short of equal consideration for all services."

Gootzeit, whose institute maintains several centers in the Bronx and Westchester caring for the severely and profoundly handicapped of all ages, said his experiences indicate a strong need for day care facilities.