

More \$\$, fewer patients for Willowbrook

State funds SICC, mental health

By DAVID O. STEWART

ALBANY — Almost \$60 million for Staten Island's three mental institutions topped the list of Island projects funded under Gov. Wilson's proposed \$9.38 billion budget for 1974-75 which was released today, while more than \$30 million was set aside for a major building program at Staten Island Community College.

Willowbrook State School received a whopping \$9.84 million increase in its allocation, raising the institution's budget to more than

\$49 million. The increase is earmarked for extra staff added over the last year from other divisions of the department, but not included in the official school budget. Another \$2.65 million was requested for "mandated contractual services" at Willowbrook.

The school for the retarded, which was listed with 4,017 employes and 3,100 patients, will see another 1,000 patients transferred to other institutions over the next year, according to the budget.

The transfers are part of a

state policy of phasing out huge mental institutions such as Willowbrook, which at one time had more than 5,000 residents.

Willowbrook was also allocated more than \$2 million for capital construction projects, including \$797,000 to plan installation of air conditioning, another \$60,000 for plans to alter other buildings, \$445,000 for electrical improvements, \$194,000 for elevators, \$134,000 for window screens and \$99,000 for the laundry. Most of these appropriations were made last year but were not spent.

The state set aside more than \$3.2 million in construction costs for the 700-bed South Beach Psychiatric Center, in addition to another \$2.78 million for start-up costs at the new institution. Most of the start-up money will go for the staff of 529.

Another \$2.5 million was earmarked for the state's one-third share of the building program of the North Richmond Community Mental Health Center, a division of St. Vin-

cent's Medical Center.

The North Richmond Center, which will contain 30 beds, is designed for "acute short-term care for mentally ill persons" on the North Shore.

More than \$30 million was set aside in the capital construction appropriations for five new buildings at Staten Island Community College.

The state is picking up half the tab for the approximately \$65 million building program, with \$12 million going to a computer center, student activities building, physical education building and additions to the science and technology facilities. Over \$11 million will

go for the state's share of a theater and music building and library, and almost \$9 million will be for an administration and classroom building.

The construction schedule in the state budget calls for a February 1978 completion of the extensive construction program.

Also in the capital construction section was \$18.5 million for "rehabilitation and improvement" to the Staten Island Rapid Transit, representing the amount left from previous appropriations for SIRT overhauls.

The Arthur Kill Rehabilitation Center of the Drug Abuse Control Commission was given a \$403,000 increase in operating funds, to \$7.34 million. The drug facility was maintained at 556 staff members, even though the resident population has declined by 165 to 387, according to the budget.