

Trained retarded work out well,

Edmonton MD says

In Saskatchewan mentally retarded adults are raising bees with the help of the province's association for the mentally retarded.

In Alberta at Calgary's Vocational Rehabilitation Research Institute adult retarded are being trained as provincial Government and the service station attendants and waitresses. "They're proving that not only do these people work well but their employers are coming back asking for more workers." Dr. Graham Clarkson of Edmonton said yesterday when interviewed following his address to the American Association on Mental Deficiency.

Dr. Clarkson believes the mentally handicapped are capable of being trained to a far greater degree than was formerly thought possible. Once out working in industry they should have the opportunity for further training as the need arises, he said.

Dr. Clarkson told the AAMD that the only reason large institutions for the mentally retarded exist is the lack of adequate services for the retarded in the community.

"I have never found an institution providing services that couldn't be provided by the community itself," Dr. Clarkson said. "The long-term objective has to be the phasing out of the large institution."

Launching successful projects in the community is the best way to convince municipalities there are ways they can help to empty institutions, he said.

Dr. Clarkson said that in a typical institution for the retarded in Canada, 88 per cent of the people admitted had come from their own home or a foster home; 7 per cent had come from a hospital or other institution.

Of those coming into the institutions from home the average age was 31 years. Cause for admission was given as difficult behavior in 47 per cent of the cases, 21 per cent for parent relief.

In the case of more than half the people admitted, no community services had been provided before admission despite the fact that more than two-thirds of these represented re-admissions, Dr. Clarkson said.

About half the admissions were children of or under school age. Half the children of school age who had been admitted were receiving no school services in the community and none of the children under school age were receiving day care or nursery school services.

Dr. Clarkson said that of the people who were discharged during the same period, no arrangements had been made in 40 per cent of

the cases for provision of community services. As for the pre-school children, arrangements for day care or nursery school services had only been made in 6 per cent of the cases.

For school-aged children, services had been arranged for only half of the children discharged.

Dr. Clarkson found that those doing productive work in the institutions represented about 10 per cent of the residents where half the cases and absence of available community resources in problems in behavioral problems in

a third of the cases.

Margaret Birch, provincial secretary for social development, addressed a luncheon meeting of the conference. Mrs. Birch said that sheltered workshops do not represent a complex solution where the retarded are concerned. "We will be working, along with our partners in various communities, to convince both employers and employees that we ought to try to create the kind of work settings where the retarded individual can function."

"To create those conditions we will need the support and

the co-operation of groups of workers and employers all across the province," she said.

Mrs. Birch told of a special project at a sheltered workshop in Oshawa where a contract has been obtained to manufacture wooden toys under licence from a U.S. firm.

"To help with the expansion and development of the workshops we will be making special grants to aid them in developing new products, negotiating contracts with local business and generally raising the standards of their employment programs."