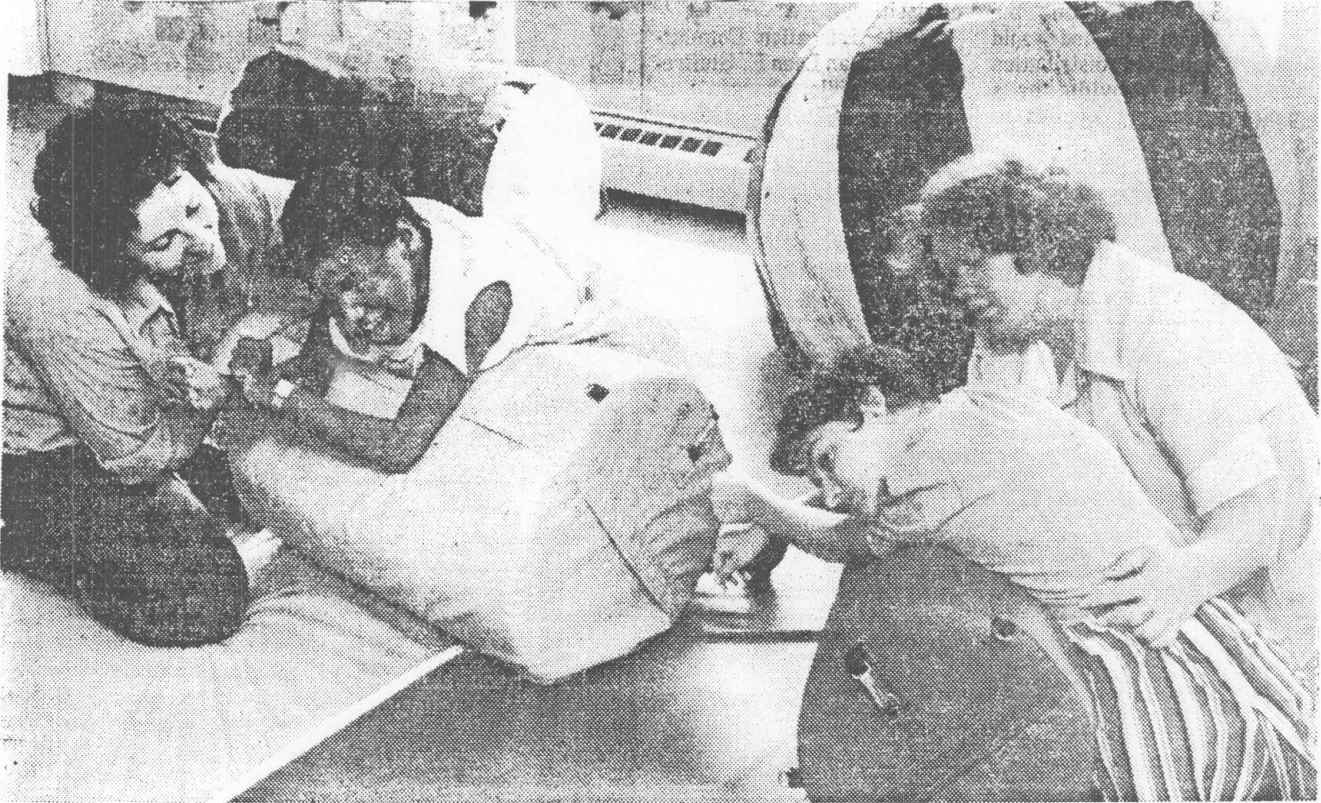


50 ex-Willowbrook residents all smiles in cheery new home



Special education teacher Robin Miller, left, and therapy aid Kristine Carlson, assist residents in physical therapy. The special therapy session is designed to improve coordination and avoid muscle spasms.

By DIANE C. LORE

A lot of smiles and looks of contentment were evident on the faces of 50 former residents of the Willowbrook Developmental Center yesterday as they spent their first full day in their new home at the South Beach Psychiatric Center.

The mentally retarded-cerebral palsied residents, who range in age from 10 to 28, were permanently transferred from Willowbrook Monday and are now residing in the new Nina Eaton Treatment Center, a facility of the United Cerebral Palsy Association of New York State. The center is housed in Building D of the South Beach center.

Named in honor of one of the founders of the United Cerebral Palsy movement, the

center is spacious and fully air-conditioned.

Residents have private and semi-private rooms, well furnished and each with a large picture window. The facility also houses an attractive dining room, kitchen and lounge area, along with therapy and examination rooms. Due to a thin budget, the only things missing from the center are "the comforts of home," such as televisions, books, toys and pictures for the walls.

Outside, in a center courtyard, there is a garden and a patio area. It was here that many of the residents were found, enjoying the warmth of the sun. The residents were joined by enthusiastic attendants.

Most of the building's facilities are accessible to the residents in wheelchairs.

Aside from the improvement in physical conditions, the ratio of staff to residents in the new treatment center is now one and a half to one, as opposed to the one to nine ratio at Willowbrook.

The center is staffed by 43 former welfare recipients who underwent an intensive five-week training period before being hired as attendants by United Cerebral Palsy. Working in three shifts, the attendants will provide round-the-clock care for the residents.

In addition to the attendants, the center has employed more than 30 professionals, including 15 nurses, a full-time doctor, a dietician, a social worker, a psychiatrist, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a speech therapist, a recreational therapist and several special education teachers.

According to Robert Schon-

*Page 1
of
2 pages*



Karen Cornish, a therapy aid, helps a resident feel at home in the new center. The residents, who are all mentally retarded in addition to being physically disabled, were transferred to the center from Willowbrook Monday.

S.I. Advance Photos by Robert Parsons



Dr. Guenther J. Gnatzy examines a resident while assisted by Mrs. Lucille Slue, director of nursing. During the first few weeks all residents will undergo a complete physical examination and evaluation.

horn, executive director of the United Cerebral Palsy Association of New York State, residents of the treatment center will spend their first few weeks undergoing medical examinations and evaluations.

Once each resident has been evaluated, an individual program will be worked out according to the results of the evaluation. Residents will undergo periodic evaluations for progress.

As each progresses, it is hoped he or she will be able to leave the facility to take part in sheltered workshops, where they will receive a small salary for their service. One of the residents has already been placed in a workshop in

Queens where she is bused daily and then returned to the center.

The new building where the treatment center is housed is provided by the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, which also gave United Cerebral Palsy a \$750,000 grant to start the center.

Schonhorn, UCP director explained that the Nina Eaton

Treatment Center is the only privately operated intermediate care facility of its kind for the mentally retarded and physically disabled. In this position, the center is being watched carefully and is regarded as an experiment.

"Presently its going to cost us much more to care for a resident here than it does at Willowbrook, but if we can get the cost per resident down to

what it now costs at Willowbrook, without sacrificing our care and rehabilitation efforts, then the center will be a great success," he said.

If the Eaton center can accomplish this within the next few years, Schonhorn feels there may be an excellent chance of small, intensive-care treatment and rehabilitation centers replacing large institutions such as Willowbrook in the near future.

*Page 2 of
2 pages*