

Center plan applauded by Abrams

The plan by Willowbrook Developmental Center officials to move residents out of the facility and back into their communities was applauded yesterday by Robert Abrams, Bronx borough president.

Abrams remarks came at a conference held in the Bronx to discuss the implications of state-ordered cuts in the resident population at the facility for the mentally retarded.

A recent court decree has ordered that the resident population be cut drastically over the next five years, and 200 residents are expected to be moved out in the next few months.

"The per patient cost at Willowbrook is currently \$23,000 a year," Abrams pointed out, "while community programs providing better care than is available at Willowbrook cost only an estimated \$16,000 per patient per year."

Abrams called Gov. Carey's recent call in his budget message for increased funding for community facilities "tremendously encouraging."

"The governor placed himself squarely behind the kind of massive restructuring of our system of services for the retarded which is an urgent priority for the state," Abrams said.