

dents to other developmental centers had been slated in 1975 and staff was slated to follow the residents.

The transfers were rejected by the Review Panel, however, and it was not until January that the staff was reassigned to Willowbrook, Coughlin said.

A May report of the Department of Mental Hygiene admitted "that professional or specialized personnel shortages have been the root cause for inadequate delivery of services" at Willowbrook and promised "innovative and special recruitment activity."

The Review Panel called the department's May promises "replete with generalizations and vague promises of future actions."

The other major Willowbrook problems highlighted by the report include:

¶ Management: "Institutional management has proved to be a persistent problem," the report says, pointing to Coughlin's April statement that Willowbrook was "administratively out of control."

The report cites management failures in closing the center's psychiatric ward, which led to numerous injuries to residents; an inability over eight months to restore 140 residents to education programs in which they were enrolled; the chronic shortage of clothing, linen and wheelchairs; the failure to hire and deploy adequate staff; lack of coordination of various disciplines; and an absence of a comprehensive plan for bringing Willowbrook into compliance with court orders.

"Genuine progress" in one



Most of the residents sleep in large open wards, however.

S.I. Advance Photos by Tony Carannante

area of Willowbrook living "fails to result in any real benefits" for residents because of "the lack of any consistent, overall approach" to management, the panel said.

¶ Programming: About 56 per cent of residents surveyed were found to be participating in less than six hours of therapeutic programming and were, consequently, "languishing on the wards."

Coughlin said that residents without programs were most-

ly adults and that a "model education program" is currently under way which should eliminate the lack of programming over the next six months.

The most positive aspect of the state's attempts to dismantle and improve Willowbrook, the panel reported, has been with a placement plan where 131 residents have been relocated in community residences.

Although the state did not

meet the court deadline of 200 placements, the 131 placements "are of good quality and have conclusively demonstrated that there are positive alternatives to institutionalization for severely handicapped members of the class."

Coughlin estimated that Willowbrook's population should be reduced to 1,915 by April. By 1981 Willowbrook has been ordered to house only 250 residents.