

serve as the base for the clinical system's testing.

DMH spent \$78,000 of its own non-grant money to "humanize" Building 29. The renovation, completed quickly, transformed an austere, cavernous structure into new compartmentalized living units, alternating soft and rich pastel colors.

Willowbrook and Rockland thought the newly designed interior necessary for the type of therapy that was to be given, and DMH gave the money to show "the department's commitment to the federal computer project," a memo of Feb. 10, 1975 states.

Under Rockland's plan, the 59 Staten Island residents chosen for the project were to be observed carefully, with every activity recorded.

A team of specialists was to judge each individual's abilities, listing the area where help was needed. A rehabilitation plan was then to be spelled out that included timetables and milestones for reaching goals in personal hygiene, vocational skills and self care.

In turn, that information was supposed to be fed into the computer. As the resident met his goals, new ones were to be set until he developed to his full potential.

But a recent visit to Building 29 showed that the brightly colored therapy rooms go largely unused, and residents are not receiving the precedent-setting goal-oriented treatment.

Rather, Building 29 is much like the rest of Willowbrook, where passivity remains the key to therapy and residents sit idly, staring blankly into thin space.

A reporter was told by the acting team leader that only four out of 16 staffers were in the building.

She said some of the others were "using up overtime," "absent for two months with asthma" and "on an interview in Manhattan."

In apparent violation of the New York State Health Code, a clerk, instead of a registered or practical nurse, was administering medicine to residents.

Dr. Jeffrey Crawford, Rockland's project director, stresses and Dr. Lester Cannon, Willowbrook's director, admits that the staffing of Building 29 is a different problem — Willowbrook's responsibility and not Rockland's.

But perhaps more importantly, the building's team leader said the therapists assigned to Building 29 "have no knowledge of the special funding or its purposes.

She said, "If you mention the Rockland program, one or two of them will tell you they were trained by them a long time ago, but if you ask about techniques, they'll say, 'I don't know.' The rest of the people would be in the dark."

The team leader added she knew of six residents who at one point received "special tests," but said she is not sure if or when the practice of recording their behavior was discontinued.

Asserting there are "many problems" with Willowbrook's administration, Dr. Crawford now says the clinical portion of the project has been moved to Was-saic Developmental Center north of the city,

But the associate director of that facility said he has "no knowledge" of the move. "We are negotiating with the Rockland group, but have not come to any terms or agreement," he explained.

Dr. Cannon, Crawford insisted, was "unsympathetic" to the program.

That appears to be true to some extent.

In January, for example, although the project was still officially being conducted at Willowbrook, Cannon sent mailgrams to the relatives of Building 29 residents, saying that all of the persons were to be moved and Building 29 converted into a home for the blind.

But confronted by irate parents whose hopes had been raised by the program (predating and above and beyond the requirements of the Willowbrook Consent Decree), Cannon backed down.

The whole matter is now being reviewed by HEW's Washington office because Rockland and the Department of Mental Hygiene have asked for a 10-month renewal of the contract to "finish" the project with \$400,000 of unexpended funds.

One of the questions to be decided in the review is the site, according to Gates L. Plumb, HEW's Washington director of Section 1115 project grants.

DMH and Rockland said they don't want the program at Willowbrook, even though the federal government admits the reason it approved the \$2.5 million in the first place was to quiet the furor that once arose over that besieged institution.