

# Carey will go ahead with plan to transfer Willowbrook residents

By TERENCE J. KIVLAN

Advance Staff Writer

ALBANY—Declaring that the “greatest progress is often made in the heat of controversy,” Gov. Carey today pledged to continue the dismantling of Willowbrook Developmental Center and other large state institutions for the mentally retarded.

In his health message to the Legislature, Carey said the Department of Mental Hygiene would proceed with the plan to transfer Willowbrook residents to small community facilities to comply with a 1975 federal court agreement. “There are many obstacles still to overcome in order to ensure competent care in the least restrictive setting, but we can and will succeed,” the governor said.

Responding to charges from parents groups that the state is “dumping” Willowbrook residents in a hasty, poorly financed effort to live up to the court order, Carey asserted the state has provided 100 percent funding for the treatment and social services of residents transferred out of the developmental centers.

Since he signed the 1975 consent judgment, Carey contended, the Depart-

ment of Mental Hygiene has “followed a policy of placing individuals from an institution into a community only when a supervised living arrangement and a full day program are available.”

“We have come a long way as a state and a society in community health,” the governor added. “The greatest progress is often made in the heat of controversy.”

But Carey’s budget for the transfer program has drawn criticism not only from the parents’ groups but also from Thomas A. Coughlin, the deputy Commissioner for mental hygiene. Coughlin said last week that, while the budget would take care of the transferees, it would fail to provide enough for the community facilities to absorb new clients not coming from big institutions.

The New York Association for Retarded Children, the largest parents’ group involved in the 1975 court agreement, has called for a moratorium on all further transfers and may go to court to prevent Carey from moving out some 400 of Willowbrook’s remaining 1,650 residents this year.

Also in his health message, Carey called for measures to tighten the operations of the state’s network of

(Continued on Page 5)

# Transfers to go on at Willowbrook

(From Page 1)

local Health Systems Agencies. The governor said he will propose legislation setting a target for all capital spending by the HSAs and requiring them to publish reports on the concrete resources available to them for capital construction.

The new procedures will give each HSA the "incentive" for more careful reviews of projects, Carey said. Each proposal will then be evaluated in Albany on a comparative basis.

In addition, Carey said, he has asked the Office of Health Systems Management, the HSA umbrella unit, to require hospitals to submit economic impact statements for proposed alterations showing the effect of the project on the medical centers' own financial resources and on the community at large.

The governor said he will take the following other actions:

☐ Propose legislation to require hospitals to make inspection reports and other important documents accessible to the public.

☐ Submit a bill requiring hospitals to hold public hearings before dropping a third party payer and prohibiting the medical centers from refusing Medicaid patients.

☐ Purpose a change in state law to permit doctors to admit private patients in municipal hospitals. The proposal is a part of a program to halt a trend in which public medical centers have become holding pens for the poor.

☐ Develop a coordinated strategy to provide better care to the elderly and chronically ill. It would be carried out by all the state's health and social services agencies.

☐ Ask the state advocate to examine hiring requirements at state agencies to find ways of ending discrimination against the handicapped. In addition, all the laws involving the handicapped will be consolidated into one volume.

☐ Order the new Commission on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse to provide direct grants for school programs in

problem areas of the state.

☐ Request a \$50,000 appropriation for the Toxicology Center to fund a joint state — industry study for developing ways of protecting New Yorkers from chemical contamination.

☐ Support legislation to provide increased aid to voluntary ambulance services through state insurance coverage and funding training courses for corpsmen.

☐ Propose grants to fund studies on ways to reduce breast cancer and hypertension.

*Page 2 of 2*