

Shakeup set for employees at UCP center

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many words that if we don't like it, we can quit."

A teacher aide said the agency had diverted some resentment by making a scapegoat out of Reagan's economic policy, which the primarily black and Hispanic workforce distrusted anyway. Like other employees, the teacher aide asked not to be named.

United Cerebral Palsy officials declined to discuss the specifics of the shakeup or the agency's purported financial problems yesterday.

"There is a reorganization of the entire staff which was part of our plans for the past six months or so," Walter Rosenthal, the agency's public relations director, said.

"It's no secret, and it's nothing out of the ordinary. I think all organizations re-evaluate their structures all the time."

Contending that the plan threatens patient welfare by slashing staff who come in direct contact with the retarded, employees outlined it as follows.

¶ Direct care staff — who dress and feed the retarded patients — are being given more responsibility. Instead of one worker per four patients at the Warner Center, the ratio will be 1 to 6, although only patients who can walk are affected.

¶ The workload of building administrators at the Warner Center is being doubled. Each administrator will handle two buildings, with about 160 patients and several hundred workers in each pair of buildings.

¶ Also at the Warner Center,

59 teacher aides are being demoted to therapy-aide status. In a move some workers say is calculated to discourage union organizing by the United Federation of Teachers, both teacher and therapy aides are being renamed "aides."

¶ Direct care staff at the Warner Center are being denied customary Saturdays and Sundays off. Instead, they will be assigned weekdays off, when they will be replaced by part-time help. It is a change the staff, whose base pay is \$9,500, predict will increase absenteeism.

¶ The upper administrative ranks, responsible for both institutions and group homes, are being fattened. New positions include four regional directors at a base salary of \$32,000; four associates and eight assistants, at starting salary from \$25,000 to \$27,000.

Picker, the special assistant in the Office of Mental Retardation, said that overall, social agencies in New York State expect to lose 3 percent of their federal Medicaid allowance in fiscal 1982.

But he added that various forms of relief may reduce the loss to 1 percent and that the Office of Mental Retardation is expected to feel the impact less than other agencies.

An audit completed earlier this year by state Comptroller Edward V. Regan found that United Cerebral Palsy had improperly kept or overbilled for \$10.5 million in Medicaid funds. The agency has returned part of the money, but is disputing that it owes the remaining \$3.6 million.