

12th suspect arrested in drug sales

By JEAN LEVINE

A Clifton man arrested yesterday became the twelfth person apprehended recently in an ongoing roundup of alleged drug dealers at the Staten Island Developmental Center.

The suspect, Alvin Evans, 32, of 141 Park Hill Ave., who had been a child care therapist at the state institution for the mentally and physically handicapped until he quit two months ago, was taken into custody by authorities at 10:30 a.m. while at work, officials said.

Presently a security guard at the Park Hill Homes, Evans has been charged with the sale of heroin, police added. He was arrested on the basis of a warrant signed May 25 by Criminal Court Judge William Miller.

Sgt. Dennis Gill of the Brooklyn South-Staten Island Narcotics squad, the leader of a six-month

probe into drug sales at the center, said a small quantity of marijuana was found on the suspect when he was apprehended.

More arrests are expected by Friday, but authorities declined to say how many.

Evans was arraigned yesterday afternoon in Stapleton Criminal Court before Judge Royal Radin, who ordered that the case be sent before a grand jury.

On May 27, police arrested 10 employees — eight of them mental health therapists and two mental health aides — and charged them with the sale of various drugs at the institution.

Nearly all of the suspects were from Staten Island, and all had worked at the center for at least a decade, authorities said. Nine of the defendants, most of whom had no previous criminal record, were released without bail by Judge Royal Radin following

their arraignment in Stapleton Criminal Court 10 days ago.

The 11th suspect was arrested last Friday and she has also been accused of selling heroin, according to Gill. The 23-year-old woman was arraigned last Wednesday and released on her own recognizance after Radin ordered that the case be waived to a grand jury for disposition sometime this week.

Police said Evans, a four-year employee of the center, had supposedly been selling drugs on the state-owned property for "a minimum of six months" — up until the time he had quit his job at the institution.

Lt. William McNeice, assigned to the same narcotics unit, estimated the alleged dealers netted its participants — each operating independently of the other — collectively about \$225,000. He said each dealer sold between \$200 and \$300 worth of cocaine, LSD

or heroin per day.

Police believe 60 percent of the drug sales involved heroin.

The center's former director, Dr. Ella Curry, said last week she first noticed the growing drug distribution problem among the 36-year-old institution's 1,800 employees in 1981, reporting it to her superiors, who contacted police last January.

Authorities contend that the dozen suspects allegedly sold drugs to co-workers and others who knew of the availability of drugs on the property and came to certain buildings on the institution's 383-acre campus to buy it.

Mrs. Curry said it was the first time the center had had such a large number of people arrested for drug dealings. In the past it had only involved a few isolated instances, she added.

Gill said the investigation is continuing.