

125 deficiencies cited by feds, state

Reports rip into SIDC conditions

By JULIE MACK
Advance Staff Writer

The federal government is threatening to stop Medicaid payments to Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC) if the institution fails to correct more than 125 deficiencies cited in new survey.

Alan Saperstein, associate regional administrator of the federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), said his agency was "very concerned" about the conditions it found at SIDC during a visit the week of Feb. 6. The institution in Willowbrook houses more than 800 mentally retarded persons, many of them multi-handicapped.

The report was obtained by the Advance through the Freedom of Information Act. Its release follows another report on SIDC released last week by the Office of the Special Master and the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

The state report, based on an audit conducted in May, cited many of the same problems found by federal investigators, but the federal report is much more critical.

Among the observations it made were:

- "The human rights of clients were not safeguarded and their human dignity was not fostered, as evidenced by the number of clients observed nude in Buildings 11, 13 and 15 on the morning

of (Feb. 10). Female clients were completely exposed to staff and visitors, both male and female ... A male client was in the dining room in his underwear. He was fully exposed ... Female clients were in close proximity ... There was no attempt by staff to address the situation."

- "There was inadequate monitoring of communicable infections ... the infection committee met only once in 1983 ... Over 100 residents were identified as hepatitis carriers. There was no specialized program to prevent the potential spread of the infection ... Ophthalmic, optic and nasal drops were administered from stock bottles among the different residents ... Disinfection of eating utensils was not satisfactory."

- "(On Feb. 10) in Building 15, clients came to the dining room in an assortment of nightclothes and underwear and many had bare feet. One client was barefoot and had a soiled bandage on one foot."

- "In Building 5, Ward C, dirty clothes were littered on the floors of rooms at the top of the stairs. The water fountain was filthy, encrusted with an unknown substance. Garbage was found in the lockers. The clothing room was filled with garbage and empty cans ... (In Building 7, Ward C) the privacy curtains (in the bathroom) were covered with an unidentified brown substance. In the day-