

*cc to  
Mrs. Luther  
ret  
file*

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Office Memorandum

DEPARTMENT Public Welfare

TO : Hon. Karl F. Rolvaag, Governor  
Attention: Mrs. Sally Luther

FROM : David J. Vail, M. D.  
Medical Director

SUBJECT: Bed Capacities

DATE: June 23, 1965



I have your note of June 7, 1965, and I recall your speaking to me over at Macalester the other day about bed capacities. The figures are as follows:

	Health Dept. Bed Capacity*	Average daily population May, 1965	
Anoka State Hospital	922	796	767
Fergus Falls State Hospital	1452**	1303	1173
Hastings State Hospital	644	624	624
Moose Lake State Hospital	940	849	853
Rochester State Hospital	1256	862	773
St. Peter State Hospital	1769	1315	1281
Security Hospital	201	173	164
Willmar State Hospital	861	779	815
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8045</b>	<b>6701</b>	<b>down 1344</b>

(The following figures from Frances Ames)\*

Faribault State School and Hospital	2273	2709	
Cambridge State School and Hospital	1660	1722	+124 at IO***
Brainerd State School and Hospital	1432	1232	
	<u>5365</u>	<u>5663</u>	overage: 298

\*Based on 60 square feet of dormitory space per bed

\*\*Unchanged since 1956 or before

\*\*\* Lake Owasso

*Note: 700+ are on the mentally retarded waiting list.*

I am frankly very hazy about the validity of these figures. I think some of these surveys were carried out a long time ago, but on the other hand, some of them are reasonably current. I think I have expressed myself to you about what I regard as a potentially dangerous trend in some of the discussion now going on. That is, one hears a lot of reference to "empty beds in the mental hospitals" as if there is row after row of beds standing vacant. What I think these figures show is that the hospitals for the mentally ill have at last reduced their populations to the point which could be viewed as reasonable. As you know from the Brainerd retreat meeting, I am in favor of a realistic and, if you like, scientific approach to this problem of how to make the best use of space in the mental hospitals as it becomes available, and at the same time relieve overcrowding at the hospitals for the retarded.

DJV:rcj  
Signed in Dr. Vail's absence

*David J. Vail M.D.  
R.D.V.*