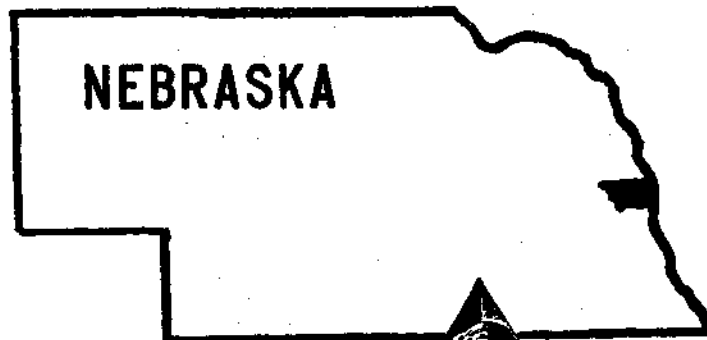


THE INITIATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
OF A  
COMPREHENSIVE, COUNTY-WIDE  
SYSTEM OF SERVICES  
FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED  
OF  
DOUGLAS COUNTY



"RETARDED CHILDREN  
CAN BE HELPED"

VOLUME I

## Overview of the Proposed Organizational Structure

The proposed administrative structure tentatively entitled the Douglas County Department of Mental Retardation is graphically outlined in Appendix B, Table 5. Detailed organizational charts follow in Appendix B, including the organizational chart for the Director's Office of the Department and the four major Divisions (Tables 6-10). This proposed structure is one of several available ones, all of which are workable and efficient.

As illustrated, it is proposed that the Douglas County Department of Mental Retardation be divided into four major Divisions:

Family and Resource Services,  
Residential Services,  
Vocational Services, and  
Central Services.

The organization and services to be provided by each Division are discussed in the following pages of this report; more detailed descriptions are provided in Volume II.

## The Organization and Delivery of Services

### Division of Family and Resource Services

Many families have maintained their mentally retarded child at home—often in the face of tremendous personal sacrifice—without supportive services to the family and without developmental, social, or educational programs for their child. Only the hope that help was on the way at local level has sustained many of these families from day-to-day. Each year, some have been forced to give up the long vigil—particularly when faced with family crisis or stress—and petition for institutionalization of their retarded child. The emotional scars inflicted upon each family member by such a broad traumatic decision may never heal. It is firmly believed that a broad spectrum of Family and Resource Services must be available to provide the relief and the support needed by families of the retarded who are struggling with the impact of mental retardation. Therefore, it is advocated that the following outlined programs are necessary parts of the Division of Family and Resource Services. For the proposed organizational chart of the Division and the projected staff budget, refer to Appendix B, Table 7, and Appendix C, Table 13.

1. Developmental Day Care Centers. It is proposed that at the current population level of Douglas County, 175 Developmental Day Care Center places for the retarded will soon be needed. These places could be provided in seven Developmental Day Care Centers of twenty-five

places each, although fewer centers of a larger size could prove preferable. A Developmental Day Care Center is a facility where retarded individuals can spend part or all of a day in constructive activities while residing either in their own home or in special residential-living units. The purposes of Developmental Day Care Centers are:

1. To provide activities which:
  - a. stimulate a retarded individual's perceptual, motor, speech, and language development;
  - b. accelerate a child's intellectual growth; or,
  - c. prevent a retarded individual from deteriorating intellectually even below his current level.
2. To assist in the development of the retarded individual's social and self-care skills, such as walking, dressing, personal grooming, feeding, manners, etc.
3. To upgrade the retarded individual's abilities so that he might progress into higher-level programs, such as special education classes, vocational training, or sheltered employment.
4. To provide relief to the families of retarded individuals who might otherwise be forced to request residential care for their retarded child.
5. To permit mothers of retarded individuals to hold jobs; in some cases it might be essential for a mother to hold a job in order to maintain family continuity and functioning.

Primarily, Developmental Day Care Center services are designed to serve children who are too young, too low in mental ability, or otherwise too handicapped to be included in the public schools special education classes for the "trainable" retarded.

Developmental Day Care Centers are one of the most urgently needed services at this time, and while primarily designed to serve children, some adults may also need and benefit from such services. It is anticipated that a Day Activity Program (equivalent to day care services for children) may be needed for a few adults who are too handicapped to enter into a sheltered work program, but who are capable of participating in some form of developmental activities. However the demand for Developmental Day Care Center services will be greatest for the two through seven age group. The need for such services will decrease for those in the older age groups as alternative services are made available to them.

Flexibility of scheduling in and among Developmental Day Care Centers will be essential. Some Centers should be open for as many as ten to eleven hours daily, while other Centers might only need to operate five to six hours daily.

2. Crisis Assistance Unit (Residential Service Type 10). Throughout this report, ten different types of residential services will be defined, discussed, and labeled so as to be consistent with the residential services defined in the three-volume report of the 1968 (Nebraska) Governor's Citizens' Study Committee on Mental Retardation referred to in the Preface.

The purpose of a Crisis Assistance Unit is to provide families with temporary relief from the demanding home care of retarded family members so that the maintenance of the retarded person within the family can be facilitated, and institutionalization avoided. A Crisis Assistance Unit should provide residential care as well as less than full-day care, such as emergency babysitting for several hours on a particular day.

Services rendered by the Crisis Assistance Unit might include:

- a. Residential care for several days--up to a month--in order to provide relief from family stress; to permit the family to take care of business matters, move to a new home or location, or take a desperately needed vacation; or to help families surmount major crises such as illness, separation, birth, death, etc.
- b. Non-residential supervision for a few hours during a day or an evening, both for crisis and stress relief, so that couples or parents without partners may have an opportunity to take care of business and personal affairs, go shopping, take an out-of-town trip for a day, or even to have a little fun just as their associates and friends do, without the burden of a retarded family member.

The Crisis Assistance Unit should be physically arranged so that both sexes and all ages can be served. The maximum stay per admission would be one month, and maximum residence time per year would be approximately two months. No minimum should be set. With a projected average

stay of two weeks per resident, each bed would thus serve approximately twenty-four persons per year. It would be appropriate to plan for twelve beds which would serve approximately 300 residents yearly. In addition to the residential clients, it is anticipated that from six to twelve additional clients might be served daily on a part day or evening basis. Demand for the part day care would be much higher in the evenings and on the weekends. Thus, the Crisis Assistance Unit could serve 1,000 families within a year with residential and non-residential care.

For these briefly summarized reasons, it is easy to see why a Crisis Assistance Unit would be an economical investment in that it would prevent costly long-term residential care by providing relatively inexpensive short-term services. This service would provide care and supervision for that short but crucial element of time that many families need in order to make an adequate adjustment during a period of stress.

3. Family Evaluation and Guidance Service. Specialized diagnostic and evaluation services beyond those presently available to the mentally retarded citizens of Douglas County are needed. Such services constitute a keystone to the effective development and utilization of all other community services. An evaluation service is one program which will be needed by both the proposed Douglas County Department of Mental Retardation and by Educational Service Unit #3.<sup>1</sup> It is conceivable that the cost of

operating a service-oriented comprehensive multi-disciplinary evaluation program could be shared, at least in part, between Douglas County government and ESU #3.

As in the case of evaluation services, family guidance is a service that is vitally needed both by the proposed Douglas County Department of Mental Retardation and ESU #3, and as such, might also be jointly funded.

Services envisioned within the Family Evaluation and Guidance Service section—designed mostly to maintain the retarded child within his own home are:

- a. Social Casework Service for retardates and their families, including intake and follow-up into various other services offered by the Department.
- b. Diagnostic and Evaluation Service for retardates and their families including clinical testing, diagnosis, and evaluation services.
- c. Citizen Advocacy Service which would require an office staff of social workers and perhaps other personnel, such as a part-time attorney. This staff would provide referral, legal counseling, and supervisory services which would enlist and back up hundreds of local citizens in the provision of a range of one-to-one relationships. These relationships could be as informal as personal guidance, friendship, and emotional support. In their more formal dimensions, they could include adoptive and foster care, guardianship, conservatorship, and counsel regarding -22-



personal, legal, and business affairs. By challenging and enlisting citizens to donate their concern, time, efforts, and personal resources, a great deal can be accomplished that would otherwise remain undone, or that would cost large sums of money if done by agencies and paid professionals.

- d. Home Helping Service would include visiting nurses, home economists, and visiting homemakers, all with training and orientation specifically geared to serve families who have mentally retarded and multiply-handicapped children within the family unit.
- e. Counseling Service for parents and/or guardians of the retarded, providing both individual and group counseling.

These five basic services would be augmented by such administrative tools as:

- a. A Case Registry of those needing mental retardation services within Douglas County; and,
- b. An Equipment Resource Center for the loan of special-purpose equipment, such as walkers, wheelchairs, toilet training seats, standing tables, etc., to families and/or guardians of the retarded on a short-term basis.

4. Camping and Community Recreation Service. The developmental value of constructive leisure-time activities is well-known; yet within the community, such services have not been available to many families who most need them. Inclusion of staff within the proposed Douglas

County Department of Mental Retardation for the purposes of developing leisure-time, camping, and recreational opportunities for our mentally retarded citizens is considered to be an important adjunct to other services for the retardate and for those families who are attempting to maintain their retarded family member within the family unit.

#### Division of Residential Services

To meet the needs of the mentally retarded citizens of Douglas County on a comprehensive scale, plans must be made for providing residential care, for these individuals, who, for various reasons, cannot live within a family unit. The establishment of ten distinct types of residential services has been proposed in an effort to avoid some problems associated with all-purpose residences, and in order to achieve the highest degree of integration of the retarded into the community. This integration is only possible when residential units are small enough to be readily absorbed into the social life of the neighborhood; and, smallness by its very nature implies specialization of function.

In formulating the residential service plan, the guidelines established by Dunn, Dybwad, Nirje, and Tizard in Changing Patterns in Residential Services for the Mentally Retarded have been closely followed. Also, as mentioned earlier in this report, the names and the system of numbering the residential services follow the system adopted in the three-volume 1968 report of the (Nebraska) Governor's Citizens' Study Committee

on Mental Retardation. The Crisis Assistance Unit (Type 10) has already been discussed, and three others (Types 7, 8, and 9) will be described under the section "Division of Vocational Services." A detailed description of all services is contained in Volume II. For the proposed organization of the Division of Residential Services and the projected staff budget, refer to Appendix B, Table 8, and Appendix C, Table 14.

1. Maintenance of Life (Type 1). Some mentally retarded individuals with multiple handicaps are so impaired as to require primarily medical maintenance of life services; services which might best be located in a medical facility or general hospital. It is estimated that in Douglas County approximately 100 beds would be needed for this maintenance of life care. Such services can be better offered to the residents of Douglas County locally than will ever be possible in a rural community such as Beatrice. The majority of the individuals who will require this residential service are presently institutionalized at Beatrice State Home where there is not a single full-time physician for 2,300 residents!

2. Infant Nursery (Type 2). Residential care services will be required for the mentally retarded and often multiply-handicapped infants and children up to the approximate age of 5 years, many of whom will not need maintenance of life services. While most of these infants and children can be cared for in their family homes, there will continue to be a need for residential care for some such retarded

children in cases where there is not family, or where it is advisable that the family does not attempt the adjustment necessary for the type care required by an extremely handicapped child. Considering the number of births in Douglas County each year, it is estimated that a single unit of six beds will be needed.

3. Child Development (Type 3). Residential units will be needed for young children from about age five through early adolescence (ages 10 - 12). It is anticipated that approximately sixty youngsters will need this type service at any one time. Demand for this care could drop after the development of other services designed to help the families of the retarded to maintain their children at home. Approximately ten units of this type, each residence caring for six children, will be needed.

4. Pre-Vocational (Type 4). Units will be needed that can specialize in the residential care of the adolescent between ages twelve through sixteen. Initial indications are that approximately sixty-five adolescents will require this type of service if the residents currently at Beatrice are returned to Douglas County. However, over the next ten years the demand for Pre-Vocational services should decline. It is therefore projected that approximately eight units, each containing space for about eight youngsters, will be needed within the next five years.

5. Habit Shaping (Type 5). There will be a need for specialized residential units to care for the severely and profoundly retarded who need, and who are capable of responding to, highly technical programs of "behavior

shaping." One purpose of this type of residential unit would be to establish adequate personal care habits--through the use of scientific techniques--so that many individuals could progress into less intensively-staffed residential programs. It is anticipated that places for at least twelve children and sixteen adults would be needed at any one point in time. One unit would therefore be designed for children, and one each for male and female adult retardates.

6. Structured-Correctional (Type 6). Since some retardates display difficult-to-manage or anti-social behavior, it is anticipated that minimally, two units of structured-correctional residential services, each designed for eight residents, will be needed. Emphasis on security and the correction of anti-social behavior would be the prime purposes of this type care, designed at beginning to solve the problem of the "defective delinquent," now sent half-way across the State to either the Nebraska State Home for Boys at Kearney, or the Nebraska State Home for Girls at Geneva.

7. The Aged Retardate. Old age is a great equalizer. Whether an individual was a college professor or a janitor may make little difference in functioning late in life. Thus, it is proposed that the aged mentally retarded citizens of Douglas County be integrated into ordinary local nursing homes, "intermediate homes" for the aged, etc. Because of existing federal funds, this can be accomplished at low community cost. In fact, it will probably cost the community fewer dollars to bring our aged Beatrice residents to local homes for the aged than the County currently spends for their care at Beatrice. Approximately 100 places will be needed for these aged retarded individuals,

## Division of Vocational Services

There is an urgent need for expansion of vocational evaluation, training, and sheltered employment opportunities for the mentally retarded adolescents and adults within the community, because preparation for economically productive roles in our society is one of the major justifications for the attempt to develop the skills and abilities of retarded children. Many retarded will require vocational services of a specialized nature in order to make the transition from the classroom to the world of productive work and independent living.

Douglas County is obliged to contribute \$400 per school year for each Douglas County resident enrolled in a state-approved "trainable" public school program under existing Nebraska statutes. The County government thus has a substantial investment in these children, who, upon reaching age sixteen or seventeen, will need specialized vocational training services and, in some cases, long-term sheltered work placements if the current tax support for their special education and training is not to be wasted. It makes little sense to spend these tax dollars for eight to ten years on the education of a retarded child, and then to withhold from him at age sixteen or seventeen the opportunity to become a productive adult in the business world.

The vocational services described here are needed as part of the comprehensive, county-wide system of services. For the proposed organization of the Division of Vocational Services and the projected staff budget, refer to Appendix B, Table 9, and Appendix C, Table 15.

1. Vocational Services Centers. It is projected that five Vocational Services Centers will be needed to provide a total of approximately 338 adolescents and adult retardates at any one time with vocational and social evaluation, work-adjustment, social adjustment training, preparation for community job placement, and/or long-term sheltered work employment. Such vocational services can be expected to receive a large share of their support from State-Federal Vocational Rehabilitation funds.

2. Vocational Guidance Service. Services will be needed to provide the clients of the proposed Vocational Services Centers with vocational and social adjustment counseling, auxiliary services such as speech therapy, and vocational placement in community employment.

3. Vocation-Related Residential Services. At least three distinct types of residential service units will be needed for teenagers and adults who are in vocational evaluation, training, or sheltered work employment, or who have succeeded in adjusting to the demands of competitive community employment.

a. Training Hostel (Type 7). A training hostel is a short-term residence geared to young adult retardates over the age of sixteen who are actively involved in a vocational training program. Clients for this type care would be those who do not have adequate family homes, or who have adequate family homes but need training away from the family unit in order to prepare for eventual self-sufficiency as adults. This type residential service will be needed for approximately twenty-seven young adults at any one time; three such units, each serving nine clients, are proposed.

b. Sheltered Living Hostel (Type 8). The purpose of this type unit is to provide supervised residential living for young adults who will be in need of long-term sheltered work or day activity center services. In planning for the return of the Douglas County residents currently at Beatrice State Home who are in need of this service, it appears advisable to think in terms of 250 clients. It is proposed that twenty-two units be established, each serving eleven or twelve clients. Over a number of years, the number of clients needing this type residential service might decline.

c. Minimal Supervision Hostel (Type 9). These units are proposed for those young adult retardates who are able to function in the community's competitive employment, but who need some supervision and some assistance with periodic adjustment problems in community living. Minimal Supervision Hostels would function much like a rooming house with a sympathetic landlady. Approximately sixty-five young adults and adults would need this type care at any one time; two units of thirty-two places each should be planned.

It should be noted that the three types of Vocation-Related Residential Services should be very inexpensive to operate. Type 9 will be largely self-supporting through the earnings of the residents. Type 8 residents will also contribute to their room-and-board from their earnings; besides they will require relatively little supervision. Type 7 will be largely supported by State-Federal Rehabilitation Funds. The primary cost would be the initiation of such facilities, after which they should require only modest subsidy in their operation.



Division of Central Services

The proposed Douglas County Department of Mental Retardation must of necessity include central and supportive services for the programs described in this report. Such supporting services should include the following:

- (1) Internal Business Services such as administration, budgeting, accounting, personnel, property management, building maintenance, and clerical services.
- (2) Planning and Research Services staffed to implement the continuous planning and cost projecting which will be a necessity for the Department.
- (3) In-Service Training for staff.
- (4) Comprehensive Transportation Services to assure that no child is denied services because of the location of his home.
- (5) Volunteer Services to solicit and coordinate services volunteered by citizens.
- (6) Public Information and Education Services designed to develop the awareness of families with retarded children, as well as the general public, to services and available alternative resources for the care of the retarded.

The degree of supporting technical and fiscal services which will be needed will depend on the extent to which such services can be provided by County officials such as the County Treasurer, the County Clerk, the County Purchasing Officer, the County Auditor, and computer services the County may develop. For the organization of the Division of Central Services and projected staff budget, refer to Appendix B, Table 10, and Appendix C, Table 16.

#### IV. NEEDED PHYSICAL FACILITIES

"Brick and mortar do not a program make." Quality of staffing is of greater importance than quality of housing in providing adequate services for the mentally retarded citizens of Douglas County. Where physical facilities are needed, size and location of these facilities are more crucial than whether they are owned, rented, or leased. Indeed, there can be many advantages—in terms of flexibility and economy—in renting, leasing, or buying, rather than constructing a new building. It may be pleasant to have modern concrete, glass, and stainless steel buildings from which to operate service programs; however, this concern ranks low on the list of priorities. Having ideal physical facilities for needed programs is the goal for future years, after the necessary services have been developed, adequately staffed, and operating efficiently.

Most certainly, no institution, large or small, should be constructed in Douglas County for the purpose of providing traditional institutional care for the retarded. While it is obvious, that residential services such as described herein are needed, these should be special-purpose programs which are designed for small homogeneous groups of retardates needing the services for which the specific facility is prepared.

Douglas County contains a wide variety of existing physical facilities which could house the proposed community service programs. Among these facilities are:

- (1) Vacant commercial and/or business buildings which could house Vocational Training and Sheltered Workshop programs.

- (2) Older and/or larger residential dwellings and multiple-unit apartment buildings which could accomodate the various residential service programs.
- (3) Existing medical and hospital facilities, which typically operate at less than capacity; these facilities could accomodate medical or geriatric residential units.
- (4) Church buildings haying specifically designated and designed "educational units"; many such units are unused either during the week or the week-end and should be relatively available for programs such as Developmental Day Care Centers. Several congregations have already indicated or demonstrated their willingness to have their educational facilities used during the week for programs of this type.

## V. A SIX-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

It is proposed that the comprehensive, county-wide system of services described in the previous sections of this report be fully implemented in Douglas County over a period of six years. These services should be carefully planned and implemented in an orderly fashion in annual increments. If such a long-range, phased development of community services is adopted, this County's residents at Beatrice State Home could all be returned to Douglas County for care, education, and training by July 1, 1974! This would set an example of enlightenment and progress to the nation.

The proposed administrative structure is illustrated in detail in the tables of Appendix B. The proposed projections for staffing these various Divisions is detailed in the tables of Appendix C. On one hand, the proposed staffing patterns are generous, but on the other hand, some of the salaries may be low and little allowance has been made for inflationary trends.

It is resided that the feasibility of fully implementing this proposed system of services within the next six years hinges on several important factors. These factors pertain largely to legal authorizations which may be provided by the Nebraska Legislature in the 1969 session. For example, the Governor's Citizens' Study Committee on Mental Retardation advocated implementation of a State-County Funding Partnership which would encourage the development of local community services for the mentally retarded. Such a funding partnership would provide funds from the State's sales-income tax revenues to match locally appropriated County property tax funds on something like a 60% State - 40% County basis.

In turn, the State and County funds could be used to earn matching federal funds for many types of local services. In the past, Nebraska has lost a great deal of Federal money because of its failure to provide the matching portions, even when this matching portion has been as low as ten percent.

If the proposed partnership is enacted by the 1969 Legislature, the appropriation of \$1 of Douglas County tax monies could, in some program areas, be matched by as much as \$12 of State and Federal monies. These funds could then become the means for supporting extensive community service programs designed to develop the potential of the retarded of Douglas County and to assimilate them into the local community.

Although the State-County Funding Partnership would be the most useful and efficient mechanism for implementing the entire proposed system of services, other methods of funding are possible. Such sources are being examined and should continue to be examined as a means of developing new services for the retarded, as well as expanding existing services regardless of State Legislative action concerning the funding partnership.

Among the Federal departments which expend funds for services to the mentally retarded are:

- (1) The Office of Economic Opportunity,
- (2) The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
- (3) The Department of Housing and Urban Development, and
- (4) The Department of Labor.

The following specific funding mechanisms appear to be already in existence:

- (1) The Nebraska State Department of Public Institutions has indicated that it may be possible to pay local authorities for use in local residences the same monies as are required for maintaining a person at Beatrice.
- (2) Many Douglas County residents currently at Beatrice over the age of 18 should be eligible for Aid to the Disabled on the basis of Mental Disability. If such grants included an appropriate amount for room-and-board, there might be a possibility of funding adult residential units through State and Federal funds available for this purpose.
- (3) Similarly, retarded adult children of individuals eligible for Old Age Security Disability Insurance Benefits are sometimes entitled to payments which can be applied toward their expenses in a residential service.
- (4) Retardates who are in need of "hospital care," and who are receiving public assistance, or who are dependents of assistance recipients, appear to be eligible for Medicaid. This program would then pay their medical expenses and cost of care in a medical facility through combined Federal, State, and County funds.

- (5) The Office of Economic Opportunity has established a procedure for obtaining Federal grants for numerous types of services to the mentally retarded which do not require matching funds, at least initially, for demonstration programs.
- (6) The existing State-Federal Rehabilitation programs can cover the costs of vocational training of many retardates, including, in some instances, the cost of residential services.
- (7) The cost of some of the proposed programs and services may be reduced by the use of student teachers from local colleges and universities, and of trainees in such programs as the Job Corps and the Division of New Careers of the Concentrated Employment Program.
- (8) Federal staffing grants for new services are available. These grants will pay up to 75% of costs the first year, and continue paying decreasing proportions of the costs for a total of four and a fourth years.
- (9) Contributions from private local foundations, bequests, and donations of space, furnishings, supplies, and materials are other distinct possibilities.

The Douglas County Board of Commissioners is urged to support the relevant legislation in the 1969 session of the Nebraska legislature. However, even if the funding partnership were not enacted in 1969, Douglas County should proceed in the development of local services for the mentally retarded. For some services, State and Federal funds can be earned under

already existing legislation. For other services, the County already spends a great deal of money outside the County, and might just as well spend that same amount of money within the County boundaries. If status-quo is maintained—regardless of whether Douglas County or the State of Nebraska is paying the bill—it is estimated that by July 1, 1974, Douglas County taxpayers will be paying upwards of \$3,500,000 per year (double to triple the current amounts) for the support of their community's residents at Beatrice State Home, provided that the current population trends continue. Finally, the concept that Douglas County should spend some funds for purely humanitarian reasons needs no support from economic arguments,

This, then, is the challenge presented to the Douglas County Board of Commissioners:

- (1) To have the foresight to plan new and innovative approaches to the development of community services for the mentally retarded citizens of Douglas County.
- (2) To make sufficient preparation so that Douglas County will be ready to take advantage of any State or Federal Funding-Partnership programs that become available.
- (3) To utilize all available resources which will enable Douglas County to develop excellent community services, with sufficient financial support, as an extension of the growing trend to meet urgent human needs within the community.