

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE
MINNESOTA SCHOOL AND COLONY

The Minnesota School and Colony was visited on October 30, 1954.

This institution is located in the city of Faribault. It has a large main building with wings, constructed of sandstone. There are many separate groups made of various types of buildings. There are said to be 33 buildings housing patients. Five miles away from the Main Campus are two buildings widely separated known as the Walcott and Grandview.

The Main Building has a wooden interior. It houses offices, a dining room, and quarters for patients on the first floor. In the rear is the auditorium and school rooms. A congregate dining room for patients is in the basement, also an employees' dining room is located in the south wing basement.

On the second floor are quarters for patients, one dormitory for 31 little girls whose day room is in the basement.

There are 62 girls in Grades G I E, their dormitories are on the first floor, with day room in the basement. Altogether there are 180 children in this building.

The need for additional aids is shown by the fact that one aid at night covers part of the second floor and the basement. One other aid covers the rest of the second floor and the dormitories on the first floor. The patients in ward J, 31 girls, and K, 32 girls, sleep in 4 small dormitories on the 2nd floor.

Since this building is not fire resistant, with its wooden floors, the danger from fire, especially at night, is very great. It would be impossible to evacuate these small children from 3 floors by 2 aids. More will be said under personnel about the acute need for more aids throughout this institution to properly safeguard the lives of the patients.

The Walcott Building houses 16 male patients. It is an old wooden building of two stories and in need of repair and paint. There are 550 acres of farm land, and young stock is cared for here. The barns are not good and have been condemned by the Fire Marshall. Since it is not economical to conduct so small a unit it should be closed, the house sold and the young stock moved to the new Dairy Unit.

The Dairy Unit is of steel construction and has an up to date milking parlor that handles 12 cows at a time in the most modern, sanitary manner.

The ward building there houses 25 male patients who work in the Dairy Farm. It is very well run and is a unit of good construction. It has a neat and attractive dining room. There is a small sewing room upstairs and a 26 bed dormitory. The aids were making Halloween decorated popcorn balls for the patients and the dining room and day room were decorated for Halloween.

Grandview is rightly named. It is a building on the top of a rise of ground completely by itself, with a view to the horizon in all directions. It is completely isolated from any other buildings. It houses 70 elderly men who do little work except caring for flower beds and the necessary housekeeping. It is well kept as there is apparently a good couple in charge who have an apartment in the building. There are two 28 bed dormitories and one 14 bed dormitory for patients.

The building is heated by coal mechanical stoker and the cooking is done with bottled gas. It has its own well (approved) and water softener. The day room is in the basement.

In case of fire, Fire Department help would have to come from 5 miles and there would be no shelter nearby for the patients. If such a catastrophe should take place in a cold winter night there would certainly be a loss of life from exposure alone.

Since the building offers a life that is a happy contented one for this type patient, I think the building should be continued in use, but automatic sprinklers should be installed.

As there are 33 buildings housing patients with buildings divided up into many wards, no attempt was made to visit every building. However, typical buildings were selected and inspected. In a number of cases where there were similar buildings, one housing male patients and one female patients, only one of these buildings was seen. The outlying buildings, such as Walcott, Grandview and the building housing patients at the dairy were seen and an inspection report made, which is enclosed.

Hickory and Elm buildings are very new and modern resembling the type of Geriatric buildings the State has built at various hospitals. Hickory handles male patients and Elm female patients. Hickory has a well equipped dental unit.

The hospital building is an excellent building with tile walls, asphalt and terrazzo floors. It has forty single rooms. Twenty-four 2 and 3 bedrooms and six dormitories with twenty beds each. There are four sun parlors and six open porches. All food is brought through the tunnel to this building and patients are all fed on trays. There is a small dining room for employees. Diabetic and baby foods are prepared in the kitchen in this building. There is a well equipped laboratory in the basement. This building at the present time houses 150 patients and about 100 of them are in bed. There are many very young children of both sexes. There are cases of Cerebral Spastic, Hydrocephalia, Microcephalic, Mongolians, and various combinations of these diagnoses, such as Cerebral Spastic with Microcephalic. There are various cases of congenital hearts. Dr. Bruhl showed me through the building and pointed out the various cases. Others were the result of German Measles in the mothers and in some the RH factor was involved. The hospital appeared to be very well run and to be doing excellent work. There is an isolation unit in the hospital with eight rooms on the first floor. There are eight rooms in the basement, which is more than three feet below ground level.

Chippewa building houses 321 male patients. These are of all types and their ages range from ten to sixty years. Many of the patients are workers, some are cripples and many are untidy. There are accommodations for eight employees to live in this building. There are five wards in this building and a separate dining room for these patients. The food comes through the tunnel in open containers and has to be carried up steep stairs and there is danger of patients being scalded.

Dakota houses 125 very regressed untidy patients, many of whom are crippled. There are three wards here. The interior of the building needs painting. The dining room is inadequate. There is no separate serving room. The food comes

by tunnel to Chippewa building and is then carried by hand out of doors up some very steep steps to this building. It is carried in open containers. In the dayroom of Ward 7, all the patients were barefooted and untidy. There is a recreation room upstairs and also two employee rooms.

Pine and Spruce are modern buildings. Pine is used for male patients and Spruce for female patients. These buildings handle children up to six and seven years of age. There are 108 patients in Pine. Food is brought to this building through the tunnel in ordinary containers. None of these containers are in too good of a condition. At least 75 of these 108 patients are in bed. There is an apartment for married couples in each building. It is noted above that these buildings are of modern construction with walls being part tile, floors of asphalt tile and the ceilings are of acoustical material and the trim is metal. There are ten rooms for isolation in each building. These can also be used for observation cases.

Cedar and Maple buildings are identical. Maple is for male patients and Cedar for female patients. These have 110 beds and the patients are regressed, untidy and hyperactive. Construction is modern with tile half way up the walls and floors of asphalt tile. The ceilings are of an acoustical material and the trim is metal. There are ten single rooms and two dormitories of fifty beds each in both these buildings. The windows are reinforced glass. There is a steam table in the dining room. The food is carried through the tunnel in ordinary containers. In the male ward there were six patients in restraint. In four cases the type of restraint could be called surgical, since it was to prevent the patients from injuring themselves. Six of the ten rooms have toilets. There is a small sewing room on the second floor.

Holly and Osage buildings are similar. Each building contains 114 beds. Holly is for female patients and Osage for male patients. Holly building was inspected and was found to be divided into two wards A and B. Osage is divided into two wards 9 and 10. There are ten single rooms in Holly, but in Osage there are no single rooms. The walls of the toilets are ceramic tile and also the floor. The floors of the dormitories are terrazzo. The examining room is all white tile. It contains a wheeled stretcher. These wards contain crippled or infirm type patients. For instance, there are 35 wheel chairs in poor condition on this floor. There are seven employee rooms on the second floor in each building. Each building has two day rooms. There are 30 patients in bed in Holly. Ten patients in this building were in protective restraint to keep them from injuring themselves. Two rooms in this building have guarded windows with detention type screens.

Personnel Requested

I find that this hospital originally asked for 61 additional psychiatric aids I this year. The reason for this large number is that many wards are inadequately covered at night. Many buildings having but one aid on at night from 10:30 to 6:30 and these aids have to cover large areas with many dormitories and several floors.

In the Main Building, for instance, there are six wards located on two floors plus the basement. As noted, there are only two people on duty each night for these three floors and each aid must cover two floors since there are 180 patients in these six wards and they are very young. The building is a serious fire hazard.

The request for six additional aids would make it possible to have one aid on duty in each ward during the day and one on each floor at night does not appear to be unreasonable.

Many of these buildings have to be left unattended while the aid on duty is required to perform regular duties, which take them away from the ward. Since almost anything can happen in the absence of an attendant, I don't think that any ward should be allowed to go unattended. Some buildings have no regular attendant on duty throughout the night. For instance, Lilacs, a cottage which has 47 female patients from twenty to forty years of age and which is located in an area where severe fire hazards exist, does not have an aid on duty during the full night shift and there is only one aid on duty during the day. Since it is necessary for this aid to leave the building to take patients to school and to work, it is left uncovered part of the time.

Pine Building, which accommodates 108 male infants and small children, has a majority who are crippled and spastic. Many are difficult to feed and all are incontinent requiring bathing several times a day. It needs an additional aid for each of the three shifts. At present, one of the aids assigned to day duty is taking relief duty at night, which reduces the staff needed for daytime work. One additional aid is asked for Spruce Building to relieve the two aids on the night shift. This building has an identical type of patients as Pine except that they are female but it does have two more aids than Pine.

One can go on justifying the need for additional aids for practically every building. In some cases, such as in Ivy Building, which is considered a serious fire hazard, additional night coverage has been recommended by the State Fire Marshall.

In all wards, patients have to be escorted to clinics, hospital, dental office, recreation activities and to work in other buildings. With the present number of aids many wards are left unattended when patients are escorted to various places.

Nine Graduate Nurse II are requested to provide proper coverage for the hospital building.

Since the surgical nursing service is at present arranged for through non-state employee services, one surgical nurse II is requested to supervise the preparation of dressing and surgical supplies for 60 ward areas and to care for the operating room and instruments.

Six Graduate Nurses I (psychiatric) are requested to take care of the medications in the TB ward and also to assist in the clinic used as out-patient dressing and examination area for all wards.

One additional social worker will be needed as a result of special study made by Central Office, of from two to three hundred patients who are being considered for community placement.

Since x-ray and laboratory work has greatly increased during the past four years due to a higher standard of care being provided by the medical staff assisted by the consultant staff, there is need for one additional medical technologist.

At the present time there are two dentists with two chairs in the Oaks Building.

The dentists point out that with one additional chair much more work could be done and there is work for one additional dentist.

A request is made for four additional physicians. I think the large number of patients and the fact that the physicians work only five days a week plus the distance between the buildings, which must make them spend considerable time traveling between buildings, justifies this request.

CONSTRUCTION

Buildings should be provided at once for the 130 patients now housed in the Main Building before any new patients are admitted. They should not be exposed to the danger of fire that now exists. Furthermore, this building should be protected by automatic sprinklers at once.

The Colony Buildings are old buildings and they should be studied to determine whether they should be repaired or allowed to deteriorate to the point where they would be replaced by modern buildings. They were inspected late Saturday, both Springdale and Haven Buildings, just as the patients were eating supper. The kitchen and dining room at Springdale are in a separate building.

It is evident that there is overcrowding in practically all the buildings except the new ones as Elm, Hickory, Willow, Pine, Spruce, Maple, Cedar and Hospital Building. As many of these patients in the overcrowded buildings are crippled or are wheelchair patients, new buildings should be of one story construction. If additional buildings are contemplated, then a study should be made to determine the size and number needed at the time. Small units of about 120 appear to offer the best method of classification and are economical to administer.

If a new institution is built and patients are removed from this hospital, then new patient construction here would not be necessary.

There should be a new Assembly Hall in a central location and the area occupied by cottage H.I.J. has been suggested as the best location. Combined with the Assembly Hall there could be a school unit and an industrial unit with a central dining unit. Three staff houses, H.I.J. on the map, could be moved to the other residential area and would then provide an excellent central location for an Assembly Hall and a central dining room. The central campus should be retained to be used as a playground or picnic area, which would not only be used by the patients but by families coming to visit patients.

The stores are kept in many areas under the Main Building. They are spread out throughout this cellar and make it difficult to control. A new store house would save money and the present area could then be used by the Chief Engineer for bulky supplies that would be easy to control.

The kitchen and laundry are adequate although crowded with equipment. One washer in the laundry is in difficulty as it is impossible to secure parts. The laundry man would like one large and one small washer to replace this. He speaks of the big load of adult size diapers that he must process each day. He states it amounts to one half ton, and that the regular laundry load is 9 tons - six days a week.

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The Chief Engineer, Mr. Wayne Saarela, appears to be competent and thoroughly familiar with his plant and its problems. He states that since the steam plant is run to capacity and the boiler setup is not flexible, the power plant is the most critical point in the institution.

He has four Heine type water tube boilers that have been in use since 1910. Also a Marine type boiler which was installed three years ago. This runs the turbine generator and the pressure is 250 lbs. The old Heine type boilers are run at 120 lbs. pressure. In 1946 the Insurance Company requested that the pressure be reduced to 90 lbs. These boilers cannot run the turbine generator and the generators they can run cannot carry the present load.

This power plant not only has to heat and light the institution but also care for the Braille and Sight Saving School. In September the plant produced 229,500 kilowatts and sold 10,200 kilowatts to the Braille School.

The Chief Engineer states that there is a real need for the new boilers and a 1,000 kilowatt generating unit. It is apparent that the superintendent and Chief Engineer are greatly worried about what could happen if there should be a failure in this important and necessary plant.

The plant burns gas and is forced to use oil in extreme weather. They have storage for five days use and a prolonged storm or a strike could be troublesome.

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As in all Minnesotan institutions that I have visited, I have found a large proportion of employees who are sincerely devoted to their work and are doing an excellent job in keeping their patients healthy and happy. This school is no exception.

Dr. Engberg, the Superintendent, is an able active director who is dedicated to his work and thoroughly competent to handle it. The school is fortunate to have such a man as its head.

Mr. Melville Krafve, the business administrator, is a keen well informed businessman and is functioning in the position found in other institutions and designated as Assistant Superintendent. I was surprised on learning his qualifications and the extent of his work that he was not so classified.

Mrs. Blomquist, who is the Director of Nurses, is competent and doing excellent work.

In closing, I might add that as I am present at the Halloween season and a great amount of recreational activity is taking place and if the happy expressions on these childrens faces and their happy cries are any indication, then these people are happy.

Another thought, tenure of office can be a disabling thing to an institution. During the war, many people are hired who ordinarily would not be but as the applicants are few, they are taken and they obtain tenure. Also, there are types who do good work during the period of tenure and then slacken. Since the quotas are based on individuals supposed to be 100% efficient, the institution is handicapped by these people who may not be more than 50% efficient. I would recommend a longer period of tenure.

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