



Mental Health

Newsletter

Vol. 1, No. 8

August, 1961

Editorially Speaking

A news item elsewhere in this issue reports a visit later this month by a team of experts from the National Institute of Mental Health. The object is to help us develop analytic and evaluation techniques with which to measure the effectiveness of the Minnesota mental health program.

Specifically we are concerned with evaluation methods at two levels:

- (1) Individual program components. How do we measure the therapeutic effectiveness of a hospital ward? Of the hospital as a complex whole? How do we measure success or failure in hospital-community relations? In a community mental health program? In hospital or community programs for the mentally retarded?
- (2) Total program. This obviously involves a composite or resultant of the individual components. The whole, however, may be more than the sum of its parts.

Available indices show how much money a state is spending while leaving unanswered the question, For what? They may show ratios of professional people in relation to patient populations but do not indicate what the professionals may be doing, or how well. Discharge statistics are fine, but can be nicely distorted by moving chronic patients from state to county rosters. Furthermore, they give no comfort to those many and honorable who believe that mentally ill or retarded patients belong inside and not outside of state institutions.

Here in Minnesota we have been experimenting with indices of open doors, restraint usage, employee morale and the like, but they have proven crude and approximate at best. The problem resolves ultimately to the lack of any real definition of "success" or "cure" in the individual patient and to confusion of values among our professions and in society generally. Possibly we seek to measure the immeasurable and ponder the imponderable.

It is, however, incredible that we have gone on for so long without any adequate definitions or indices of success. Mental health can be construed as a complex industry involving the employment of thousands of workers and the expenditure of millions of dollars. What business in open competition could survive without some internal auditing controls? Our field is shot through at best with confusion and at worst with humbug. As public servants we are accountable, and rightly so. But in the absence of real standards we may be judged on the basis of personality, not performance. We can retreat behind "insufficient staff" just as the individual therapist blames failure on the "uncooperative patient." This is unsatisfactory.

In closing, we would comment that the "top ten" state programs must be mighty crowded, because that is where at least half the states profess to be. Who is to argue?

David J. Vail, M.D.
Medical Director

Names In the News . . .

Dr. Herbert Dorken, director of Minnesota's Community Mental Health Services is concluding a month's tour and study of community mental health services and facilities in New York, New Jersey and Massachusetts. He was awarded a special project grant from the National Institute of Mental Health.

Co-chairman of the annual conference of state and federal chief psychologists August 28-31 in New York City is *Dr. Howard R. Davis*, state psychology consultant. The three day meeting will precede the annual American Psychological Association convention.

Appearing in the last quarterly edition of the *Journal of Gerontology* is an article by State Psychology Consultant *Howard R. Davis, PH.D.* and members of the Minnesota Follow-Up Study staff. Entitled "Prognostic Factors in Elderly Mental Patients", the article reports on a group of elderly patients included in the Study.

According to *Director Tom Walz*, the "Circle F" club has had a 40% increase in membership this summer. Monthly participation in the Minneapolis-based organization now includes 120 discharged patients, 100 patients in residence at Anoka and St. Peter State Hospital and 125 volunteers.

Club members are looking forward to a repeat early in September of the June three-day camping experience at Wells! Memorial Camp at Big Lake.

Dr. Albert Stunkard, associate professor of psychiatry and assistant professor of medicine, University of Pennsylvania, will make a consultation visit to Minnesota August 28. Dr. Stunkard was the 1960 recipient of the American Psychiatric Association's coveted Hofheimer Prize for an outstanding research contribution. He will meet with Franz Halbert, director of research at Cambridge State School and Hospital and Medical Director Dr. David J. Vail to advise on mental health research.

New start members at the state schools and hospitals include: Recreation Leader I Dean McClay at *Brainerd*; R.N.II Patricia Steineke at *Anoka*; Special Teachers Edward B. Wilcox and William Peno at *Cambridge*; Special Teachers Ferne Gettys and Timothy Jaech, and Psychiatrist I's Norman Lende and Marta Ozolins at *Faribault*; R.N.I Marjorie Mahler, Social Worker I Thomas Sullivan, Social Worker II Peter Chommie and Nursing Education Supervisor Florine M. Bauer at *Fergus Falls*; R.N.II Kathleen Hanson at *Gillette*; Social Worker II Evelyn Phillips and Child Care Counselor Trainees Denise L. Hawkins and O. Lee Nelson at *Hastings*; Physical Therapist I Barbara Can-tini, R.N.I Marie Englert and R.N.II Karen Bozarth at *Rochester*; Research Analyst I Gale Kreykes, R.N.I Carol Moberg and Occupational Therapist I Marilyn Lydecker at *St. Peter*; Lab. Technician II Carol Anderson and Physician II Hugo Brenner at *Willmar*.

Author of an article on housekeeping records which appears in the July, 1961 issue of *HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT* is *Mrs. Rosalie Cain*, Executive Housekeeper at the Cambridge State School and Hospital.

NIMH Consultants to Assist in Planning State Program Survey

Scheduled to meet with DPW's mental health staff in a two-day planning session August 22-23 are seven members of the National Institute of Mental Health Washington staff and United States Public Health Service consultants from the Kansas City Region VI office.

Purpose of the meeting, according to Medical Director Dr. David J. Vail is to obtain from the visiting experts knowledge concerning development and application of evaluation techniques.

Participating in the initial meeting will be the following NIMH staff members: Dr. R. T. Hewitt, chief, program operations; Dr. Harold M. Skeels, chief, pro-gram research and evaluation section; Dr. Joe Margolin, clinical psychologist; Mr. Harold P. Halpert, consultant on communications and public information; Mr. Jack Wiener, chief program analyst; and Mrs. Ruth I. Knee, psychiatric social work consultant.

Owatonna Host to 5-Day Workshop on Teaching Mentally Retarded

The third annual workshop on teaching the educable and trainable mentally retarded is scheduled for August 21-25 at the Owatonna State School. Sponsoring the 5 day session in cooperation with Owatonna State School is the Department of Public Welfare, Department of Education and Mankato State College.

Approximately 200 teachers from Iowa, North and South Dakota, Canada and Minnesota will attend.

Faculty will include Mr. Edward Meyen, consultant on special education, Iowa Department of Education; Mr. August Zietlow, instructor, school of special education, Colorado State College; Dr. Harriet Blodgett, director, Sheltering Arms, Minneapolis; and Mankato State College special education staff.

Also on the program are DPW's Commissioner Morris Hursh and Miss Frances Coakley, supervisor of the section for the mentally retarded.

Included this year, in addition to the program at Owatonna, will be afternoon demonstration classes at the Faribault State School and Hospital.

Willmar State Hospital to be Featured in "WCCO-TV Reports"

Shooting for a 30-minute documentary show on newer concepts in mental hospital treatment and the "open hospital" took place at the Willmar State Hospital earlier this month. Final editing of the film is now in progress and the showing date has been tentatively scheduled for sometime in October. The "WCCO-TV REPORTS" show is usually shown every third Thursday at 9:30 p.m.

"Stars" of the film are patients, staff and volunteers at the Willmar Hospital. Depicted will be the changes in concepts of hospital treatment which have culminated in the open hospital. The film also includes interviews with Dr. Vera Behrendt, Hospital Superintendent and Dr. David J. Vail, Director, Division of Medical Services.

Five-year Social Science Research Program begins in Tri- County Area

Preliminary work for a comprehensive survey and study of the mental health of the north central counties of Itasca, Aitkin and Koochiching began last month. This will be the first comprehensive study of the mental health of a population in Minnesota and the first in the country to be undertaken in a rural area.

Dr. Roy G. Francis, Professor of sociology at the University of Minnesota, is the director of the new research program. Dr. Francis will devote three months each summer for the next five years and will continue program supervision through regularly scheduled visits during the academic school year. Selection of a full time research assistant is planned for the near future.

The research program will operate under the jurisdiction of the Tri-County Mental Health Board and parallel to the Tri-County Mental Health Center. Headquarters of the project will be in the court house at Grand Rapids.

Seventy five percent of the cost of the new program will come from funds provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. The remainder of the funds has been requested from other sources.

Task of the program, according to Dr. Francis, will be identifying and describing the nature, distribution, location and extent of the mental health problems and strengths in the population of the Tri-County area. "Such a comprehensive mental health survey will establish the required base lines for adequate mental health planning and for measurement of the results of mental health programs,* he adds.

Dr. Francis has been on the University faculty since 1952. A graduate of Linfield College, Oregon, he received his master's degree at the University of Oregon and his doctor's degree at the University of Wisconsin. He has served as psychological consultant to the Veterans Administration and is research director for KSTP radio and TV.

New Members added to State School and Hospital Staffs

New staff members at the state schools and hospitals include: R.N. I JoAnne Johnson at Brainerd; Research Analyst I John Morris at Moose Lake; R.N. I's Delores Peterson, Marie Englert, Eleanor Gambill and Social Worker II Barton Bauer at Rochester; Psychologist I's Donald Douville, William Lydecker, Raymond Parthun and Social Worker I's Ardis Steel, Arlene Patzwall and Mrs. Jean Luckey at St. Peter; R.N. I Elsie Anderson, Psychiatrist I Fernando Lopez and Physician II Manuel Gordillo at Will-mar; and Personnel Officer John Glasgow, who transferred from Rochester to Hastings.

Final Conclusions emerge as Minnesota Follow-up Study Ends

"What services are most effective in speeding up the return of hospitalized mental patients to the community? What factors in the patient's home and community determine his successful return?" Answers to these and other questions are emerging as the Minnesota Follow-Up Study draws to a close.

The Minnesota Follow-Up Study was launched in 1957, under a U. S. Public Health Service Grant, and officially terminates on August 31. According to Dr. Howard R. Davis, Acting Director of the Study, results analyzed to date point toward the following conclusions:

Special hospital and community teams to prepare patients for discharge and to provide after-care services were effective in expediting the release of a greater number of patients from the Moose Lake State Hospital. In addition, there was a notable reduction in the re-hospitalization rate.

Pre-discharge and after-care services are more effective if carried out by closely co-operating teams at the hospital and in the community. Either team without the other dropped markedly in its effectiveness.

Patients less likely to be re-hospitalized are those who (a) have received more professional help at time of discharge and after return to the community; (b) felt less hostile, sensitive and rejected; (c) had relatives who showed understanding and tolerance for their illness, yet who looked on them as everyday human beings; and (d) were employed.

Patients remaining out of the hospital and getting along well were those who (a) had suffered most from depression rather than other symptoms; (b) had less tendency to be confused; (c) showed a positive accepting attitude toward their condition; (d) had the support of friends and their community on returning and (e) were married or had been married.

Copies of the final report of the Minnesota Follow-Up Study will be available after September 1 from the Mental Health Information Service, Department of Public Welfare, St. Paul 1, Minn.

Board Members Elected, Site named for new Range Center

Incorporation of the Board of Directors, election of officers and selection of Virginia as the site for the forthcoming Range Mental Health Center took place late last month. Target date for organization of the Range center, the 16th in the state, is September 1, 1961, according to Dr. Herbert Dorken, director of the Minnesota Community Mental Health Services program.

Summertime.... and the living is busy!

ACTIVITIES MOVE "OUTDOORS" AS SUMMER GETS IN SWING

There's an increase in tempo and a move out-of-doors as state institutions launch their summer patient activities program. Providing a "lift" for hospital staffs are over a hundred college students enrolled in the summer undergraduate training program. Additional activities are extending past hospital boundaries and into the communities.

New this year and high on the popularity list are trips to the Twin Cities to watch a major league baseball game. Complimentary tickets have been furnished by Minnesota Twins management to a number of the institutions; in others, volunteer groups have sponsored the baseball trip.

Outdoor band concerts, softball games between institutions and local teams, nature hikes, weekly ward picnics, trips to local points of interest are on the agenda at most of the institutions. Hospital-wide celebrations early in July were held everywhere, with active assistance from volunteer groups. Camping programs for patients at Faribault, Owatonna, Hastings and Brainerd have again been scheduled for this season.

New at Cambridge this summer are weekly swimming lessons by the physical education staff. Sixty-five mentally retarded and epileptic patients, in groups of five, receive weekly instruction at a nearby lake.

Going into town for meetings of the new Golden Age Club in Moose Lake are elderly patients from the Moose Lake State Hospital. At Fergus Falls, a patients' Speakers Club is now in full swing, under the tutelage of the local Toastmasters Club.

At Rochester State Hospital, members of a veterans' organization are hosts to groups of 25 - 30 patients on weekly fishing trips. In demand for frequent community appearances in the Rochester area are members of the Hospital Drum Corps.

At Hastings State Hospital, where 9 summer students have joined the Rehabilitation Therapies staff, tennis instruction at the city courts is held twice weekly. Friday afternoon swimming parties at Lake St. Croix beach and visits to Twin Cities cultural institutions are regularly scheduled events.

Patient garden clubs flourish at many of the institutions. Highlight of the club year at Willmar is the annual flower show held in the Volunteer Center. Results of the members' study during the year of flowers and floral and corsage arrangements are visible in the show's exhibits.

Joining in the move out-of-doors is the Sunday afternoon coffee bar sponsored by the Mankato Council of Church Women at St. Peter State Hospital. Adding music to the hospital scene is the patient orchestra which again became active when several highly skilled musicians were recently admitted.

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