

DEPARTMENT PUBLIC WELFARE - Medical Services

Office Memorandum

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

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FROM : R. Joseph Lucero *RJL*
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SUBJECT: Evaluation of Research Program - Faribault State School & Hospital

1. Ancient History

Faribault has a rich historical tradition in research. In 1898 Dr. A. R. T. Wiley became the first psychologist ever to be hired in an institution for the retarded in the United States. He published frequently during his stay with his major interest in sensory acuity in the mentally retarded. His first publication appeared in the June ¹⁹⁰⁰ issue of the Journal of Psycho Asthenics (now the American Journal of Mental Deficiency). The title of this article was "A Study of the Senses of the Feeble-minded." In 1910 Dr. A. C. Rogers requested of the Board of Control that a research director be appointed. Dr. Fred Kuhlman took this position and in 1911 published his first revision of the Binet-Simon. This was published in the Journal of Psycho Asthenics in 1911. A research assistant of his, Maude Merrill, of course, later became famous at Stanford University in her work with Terman.

Kuhlman left Faribault State School and Hospital to form the Research Bureau in St. Paul. This became the Bureau of Psychological Services, and this brings us to the very near past in the Central Office.

From 1920 until 1950 Faribault remained dormant.

2. Recent History and Present

Dr. Bruhl and Mr. Madow both arrived at Faribault State School and Hospital in 1950. They started doing research gradually, each in his own specialty with some cross-over. Madow has worked somewhat in psychometric comparisons and developments, while Bruhl has specialized in biochemical research. Madow and his associates have worked on the relationship between the Stanford-Binet and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Test; have demonstrated that mental retardates are closer to normals in psychomotor skills than in semantic skills; have used a new auditory screening technique that shows that 20% of their population have hearing deficiencies; have equated the Peabody and Binet with interesting side results; have developed a behavior rating scale for the mentally retarded and are working on a system of data collection and storage. Two recent program evaluations have been made better because patients in experimental and control groups have been equated, patient for patient, on as many as 13 variables. Dr. Bruhl has worked primarily in the area of controlling diets with regard to PKU problems. He and Madow have demonstrated some improvements in behavior of these patients. An effort is now going on to identify recessive carriers. Instead of the expected Mendelian 1:2:1 ratio, they have been finding a very interesting 1:1:1 ratio. This is being further investigated. Various technical problems are being attacked with regard to more accurate measurements in this field of various types.

3. My Impressions

There is a dearth of time for both Dr. Bruhl and Mr. Madow to carry out research. I am convinced that both are very competent men. I further feel that if we can give them some competent research assistants, we might well double their research output. Both are more than willing to cooperate in statewide research efforts. My over-all feeling about Faribault, strictly from the research angle, is that great potential exists with two competent men. The over-all problem of finding a full time research director type remains as it does for most of our installations.

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