

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN

REPORT ON THE ACTIONS OF THE 1961 LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE MENTALLY RETARDED

Of the fifteen (15) items in the Legislative Program of the Minnesota Association for Retarded Children, definite progress was made on five (5). Some of the proposals did not call for specific legislative action at this time.

Probably the biggest step for retarded children taken at this session was passage of the bill to provide \$36,000 in state money on a matching basis for community day activity centers. A copy of the law, as passed, is attached to this report. We suggest that associations and groups interested read this very carefully and contact the Minnesota Association if they have questions.

NEW BUILDINGS AT STATE INSTITUTIONS

The building program for the entire state has been delayed because of the state constitutional debt limit of \$250,000. An amendment has been prepared for presentation in 1962 to the people for their vote. If the authorized debt limit is increased, money will be made available for new construction. The Faribault State School and Hospital would then have money for one new male patient building. This would make it possible to discontinue the use of several old, inadequate buildings. The Brainerd State School and Hospital would receive money for four additional patient buildings.

STUDY OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND KITCHEN AT FARIBAULT STATE SCHOOL & HOSPITAL

\$6,000 has been appropriated to make a study of food handling and kitchen facilities at the Faribault State School and Hospital. For a number of years, the Minnesota ARC has pointed out that the food handling and preparation situation at Faribault is inadequate; the system is old, clumsy and very outmoded. We also asked that additional money be appropriated for a complete architectural and engineering study to determine building needs and future

development of the Faribault State School and Hospital. We were told that the state architect will make such a study and has adequate staff and facilities to do so.

PATIENT FOOD ALLOWANCE

We urged that the food allowance be increased from \$.63 to \$.65 per day per patient. Although the food allowance was left at \$.63, the amount of food available per day will be valued at \$.67. This is due to the fact that previously about \$.04 in Federal surplus foods had been counted as part of the \$.63 daily food allowance. The \$.63 per day cash food allowance is still allowed and, in addition, there will be about \$.04 per day per patient Federal food surplus available.

INSTITUTIONS STAFFING

Drastic cuts were made in institution staff requests for additional personnel. Faribault had asked for 175 new positions; this was cut to 57 by the Governor; the legislature allowed 35 new positions. 18 of the new positions will be for the expanded laundry, which from now on will also serve the Schools for the Blind and Deaf and the Owatonna State School.

The Brainerd institution had asked for 132 additional employees for their expanding program. The Governor recommended 84 new positions; 81 were allowed by the legislature. This will not adequately meet the needs of their increased patient load.

The Owatonna institution had asked for 10 new positions; the Governor recommended 3 and 2 were granted by the legislature.

Cambridge had asked for 68 new positions; 16 were recommended by the Governor; money was appropriated for 7 by the legislature.

The total institution personnel request was for 385 new positions; 125 were granted by the legislature.

CHARGES FOR CARE OF PATIENTS IN INSTITUTIONS FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED

Our Minnesota Association made no recommendations regarding the charges assessed against parents for care of the retarded in state institutions, However, our policy for the past several years has been to not oppose any reasonable change in the charges law, realizing that the state is in dire need of money and it must be made available if the needs of the mentally retarded are to be met. The previous charges bill, which was adopted in 1955, provided that parents and relatives should pay 52% of the annual per capita cost-- about \$720 per year. This was to be paid if the parents were both willing and able. If the parents did not pay this, then the county was liable for \$80 per patient per year and this could be collected by the county from the parents.

The new law provides that parents of children in institutions, to the age of 21, shall pay \$10 per month, if able, or a lesser amount if they are not able to pay the \$10 per month. This is \$120 per year. The same amount, \$120 per year, would be paid by counties for each retarded patient in a state institution; however, the counties would be reimbursed from any funds which the parent paid. A complete copy of this bill is attached and we suggest that associations familiarize themselves with it.

HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATORS

A rider attached to the appropriations bill for the Department of Welfare says that a lay hospital administrator may be appointed to head institutions and that a director of medical services may then be appointed to be in full charge of all medical care, treatment, rehabilitation, and research. A higher salary for the medical director than is now provided for the institution superintendent would be paid. The legislative intent is that this change will

allow doctors to care for the patients and be relieved of administrative duties. The administrative duties will then be in the hands of a non-medical, professionally trained hospital administrator. At the present time, all institutions for the retarded, with the exception of Brainerd, are headed by a doctor, with an assistant hospital administrator. It is our understanding that Brainerd, which now has a well qualified hospital administrator, will be able to hire a director of medical services for approximately \$19,000 to \$22,500 per year. Cambridge, where the position of head of medical services is vacant, would be able to have a psychiatrist to head the medical services, at the higher salary, as soon as a qualified hospital administrator is employed.

Faribault has a superintendent, clinical director and assistant hospital administrator and no change would be seen for this institution in the near future. It would continue to operate under the old plan.

A copy of the legislation to cover this plan is also attached,

OTHER SALARY CHANGES

A new pay plan will provide more adequate salaries for chief social workers at institutions. Top salary will be \$8,664 per year.

Special salary ranges have been established to make possible "employment of exceptionally qualified doctors of medicine where it can be clearly demonstrated that such employees cannot be employed at the rate provided for in Minnesota Statutes 1957, Sec 43.12 and 43.121 to 43.123". The new range is as follows:

Range A	\$14,000 to \$16,500
Range B	\$16,500 to \$19,000
Range C	\$19,000 to \$22,500

It is hoped that these new ranges will make it possible to fill present vacancies in institution medical staffs.

CENSUS LAWS

Bills were passed repealing several unworkable census laws, thus clearing the way for effective legislation to determine, if possible, where the retarded are and how many there are.

INTERIM COMMISSIONS

No Interim Commissions were appointed by the Legislature at this time; therefore, we do not know what the status of the proposal to have an institution for the retarded on the Iron Range will be. Likewise, no Interim Commission was appointed dealing with the study of the future needs of the retarded in Minnesota.

CHARITIES BILL

The Legislature did pass a bill regulating charities which requires that charities file information with the Secretary of State. The Minnesota Association for Retarded Children has filed this information on behalf of itself and the local chapters. This bill also requires that a report be made after the drive is over, as to expenses, income, etc. This will also be done by the Minnesota ARC.

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