

Office Memorandum

MENT

Public Welfare

TO : Committee on Self-Injurious Behavior

DATE: 2/18/69

FROM : Sandra Bisgaard
Information Writer

SUBJECT: Minutes of SIB Meeting - February 10, 1969

Present:

Sandra Bisgaard
 Susan Cole
 Marianne Doyle
 Dr. Leonard Fielding
 Alvira Hiltz
 R. Joseph Lucero, co-chairman
 Alan Mathiason
 Dr. Roland Peek
 Dr. Miodrag Ristic, co-chairman
 Jeanne Sulem
 Dr. David Willenson

Absent:

Frances Ames
 Alan Beck
 Dr. Heinz Bruhl
 Miriam Karlins
 Ardo Wrobel

- I. Dr. Ristic was appointed co-chairman of the Committee and presided over the major part of the meeting.
- II. Mr. Lucero announced that the exploratory study of self-injurious behavior in the mentally retarded has been approved by the Medical Policy Research Subcommittee and that, therefore, the Committee could now make general plans for proceeding. Three approaches to the problem of headbanging are: (1) an increase in the patients' general level of programming; (It is conceivable that this method in and of itself will decrease the incidence of headbanging) (2) use of positive reinforcement alone; and (3) institution of behavior-interrupting aversive reinforcers coupled with positive reinforcers for appropriate behaviors. Contrary to popular opinion, most headbanging begins prior to institutionalization. Therefore, whatever treatment methods the Committee devises will be appropriate to the home and daytime-activity center situations as well as to the institution.

Mr. Lucero suggested two methods of implementation: (1) Each hospital could institute intensive programming on one or more of its wards, use positive reinforcement on those who don't respond to the programming, and, lastly, use aversive reinforcement on the group that doesn't respond in either of the first two phases; or (2) each institution could specialize in one treatment method.

- III. It was decided that an invitation will be sent to four decision-makers at Brainerd, Cambridge, Faribault, and the Minnesota Valley Social Adaptation Center, and to the director of the Hastings MR unit, asking

them to attend the Committee's next meeting to discuss ways and means of implementing the project. It is hoped that Dr. Vail can also attend this meeting.

The agenda for the meeting, which will be held at 9:00 a.m. on June 2, 1969, at Cambridge State Hospital, is as follows:

MORNING SESSION

Reports on:

1. The defining characteristics of headbangers versus non-headbangers, by Dr. Bruhl and Miss Sulem.
2. The analysis of data collected through the headbanging questionnaire, by Dr. Fielding and Miss Cole.
3. The three treatment methods (regular intensive programming, positive reinforcement, and aversive reinforcement).
4. The time-sequence method of behavior observation, by Dr. Fielding and Miss Cole.
5. The incidence of headbangers in daytime-activity centers, by Mr. Mathiason and Miss Sulem.
6. The effects on headbangers of transfer to another institution, by Mrs. Doyle.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Discussion on ways and means of implementation.