

*File
10-6-74
on
WSSH*

March 23, 1973

Mr. Robert Hiltner, Superintendent
Western State School and Hospital
333 Curry Hill Road
Canonsburg, PA 15013

Dear Bob,

This is to further our conversation of Thursday, March 1, 1973. I received a copy of your March 7 letter to Chuck where you state your understanding of our meeting. This response will state both agreement and disagreement with your letter.

I have discussed the items of this meeting with members of ACC-PARC's State School and Hospital and Interim Care Committee. On the subject of written authorization by parents for ACC-PARC visits, we are in agreement. Such a procedure will be cumbersome, but we feel it is an appropriate protection for both ACC-PARC and Western State School and Hospital (WSSH). This procedure will be followed henceforth.

On the second item, surprise visits by ACC-PARC, we do not fully concur. Our Committee feels that this is a vital tool in our program of advocacy. We will, therefore, with written permission by parents, continue to visit specific residents without prior notification to Western State.

This is not to suggest that every visit will be unannounced. Unannounced visits will occur when, in our judgment, staff preparation would hinder the purpose of our visit. In these cases, ACC-PARC will contact you or your deputy upon both arrival and departure.

On your third point, we are pleased to be working cooperatively with the Board of Trustees and Parents' Group on the joint visitation. Incidentally, last night the ACC-PARC Board approved the joint visitation team as an on-going activity of our Committee. However, it is not practical to organize joint, unannounced visitation to individual residents. We are, however,

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willing to explore procedures that might involve all three groups in visits to individuals.

We would emphasize that our role on these unannounced visits has been only to observe and fact-find for individual parents. Bob Nelkin is a responsible staff member of this Association. If you have any complaints or suggestions about his visits to Western State, we would be glad to meet with you again and discuss them.

Again, we are extremely pleased that the WSSH Parents' Group, the WSSH Board of Trustees, and ACC-PARC are working cooperatively with you. We look forward to continuous joint efforts.

Sincerely,

Virginia Thornburgh, Chairman
State Schools and Hospitals and
Interim Care Committee

VT:cmw

bcc: Barbara Sistik