



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

WESTERN STATE SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL
333 Curry Hill Road
Canonsburg, Pennsylvania 15317

Grievances

ROBERT J. HILTNER, ACSW
SUPERINTENDENT

April 9, 1973

TELEPHONE
AREA CODE 412, 745-0700

Mrs. Virginia Thornburgh, Chairman
State Schools and Hospitals and
Interim Care Committee
c/o Allegheny County Chapter/PARC
917-1001 Brighton Road
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15233

Dear Ginny:

I gather from your letter of March 23, 1973 that all who are concerned with, and about, the Joint Visitation Team have reached agreement on all, but one point, the matter of independent unannounced visits regarding specific residents by ACC/PARC represented by Bob Nelkin. ACC/PARC's position on this matter was discussed at length at the March 27, 1973 Board-Parents Group Liaison Committee meeting. I am sorry that a representative of ACC/PARC was not at the meeting.

As a result of the discussion at the meeting, I have been asked by the Liaison Committee to communicate to you the grave concern of the representatives of the WSSH Board of Trustees and Parents Group present at the meeting regarding the position ACC/PARC is taking on the matter of unannounced visits to investigate complaints of parents. The Liaison Committee felt that the present grievance procedure which has been agreed to with the Parents Group has been working very well for us. John H. McLain, Vice President of the Parents Group, is the Chairman of the Grievance Committee. On his committee are Harry Goldberg, Dan Torisky, and Cyril Getsie, all of whom are intimately familiar with circumstances here at WSSH. The Parents Group requests that ACC/PARC follow the Parents Group grievance procedures in the event of an urgent complaint; eg.:

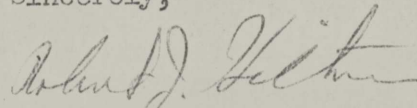
1. Have the parent call the Superintendent immediately.
2. If the parent, for some reason, does not wish to phone the Superintendent, have them phone the Social Worker assigned to the resident's unit.
3. If neither 1 or 2 above are possible, ACC/PARC, itself, should phone the Superintendent or the Social Worker.
4. Phone contacts should be followed up with a letter to the Superintendent with a copy to the Social Worker.
5. If an urgent complaint has not been handled to the parents satisfaction as the result of the foregoing procedures, the parent should phone or write to John H. McLain.

6. If Mr. McLain is not available, phone other members of the committee; ie., Harry Goldberg, Dan Torisky, or Cyril Getsie.

Most active members of the WSSH Parents Group are aware of this procedure. However, since it has not been brought to the attention of all parents for some time, perhaps, a means should be found to bring it to the parent's attention again.

I, as said earlier, am sorry that ACC/PARC was not represented at the March 23 meeting. I believe that the opposing points of view of the Parents Group and the ACC/PARC need to be discussed and a solution agreeable to both found. Perhaps, the best means of doing this would be at a meeting of representatives of Parents Group Grievance Committee; ACC/PARC's State Schools and Hospitals and Interim Care Committee; the Board of Trustees and Administration of WSSH. Please contact me about arranging such a meeting, or about alternative suggestions.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Hiltner
Superintendent

RJH:mc

cc: Rev. Joseph H. Rodgers
Mr. Louis Doughton
Dr. Harry Goldberg
Mr. Charles Peters