



RETARDED CHILDREN
CAN BE HELPED

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION for RETARDED CHILDREN, Inc.

112 North Second St. • Harrisburg, Pa. 17101 • Tel: (717) 238-4767

MEMO TO: Chapter Presidents/Executives
Executive Committee
Regional Directors

DATE: September 18, 1972

FROM: Mrs. Harry P. Clapp
President

RE: DPW News Release

The enclosed news release covers a number of items of proposed action in the interest of the mentally retarded of Pennsylvania.

As indicated there are to be review teams in each MH/MR Administrative area to inspect and evaluate private licensed facilities for the mentally retarded. If your chapter has not been contacted, please take immediate steps to contact the MH/MR Administrator to be sure there are PARC representatives on the local inspection teams.

At the State level, there is to be a statewide Review and Training Team. I have asked the following persons to serve: Mrs. Eleanor Elkin, Mrs. J.J. Isherwood, Mrs. Alice Goldberg and Mrs. Ruth Levey.

It is evident that it has taken extreme and unusual circumstances to get this motion and reaction by state government. It is imperative that we be diligent in pursuing this matter until all of the mentally retarded have appropriate facilities and programs in every part of the Commonwealth. If the PARC office can provide you with any information or assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

PPP/cc
cc

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE
HARRISBURG

RECEIVED

SEP 15 1972

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION

For release Sunday, Sept. 17
News Room and State Media
PPW 1932-72

Contact:
Bureau of Public Education
Area Code 717, 787-6987

Special inspections of the licensed private mental retardation facilities providing interim care for the mentally retarded were announced today by Public Welfare Secretary Helene Wohlgemuth as part of a vigorous statewide drive to improve services for the retarded.

"We are deeply and sincerely committed to improving and enhancing the lives of the retarded in Pennsylvania and in fulfilling that commitment we seek the cooperation and involvement of any interested group," Mrs.

Wohlgemuth said.

Private organizations of parents and other concerned individuals, community groups and specialists in a wide range of human services will participate in the program improvements, which include the transfer of 830 patients from Pennhurst State School and Hospital, action on the group home program which may now use residential-type buildings, and regulations with strong enforcement teeth.

The evaluation of private licensed facilities will be conducted through the Department's four regional offices during the month of October. Immediate corrective action will be taken where indicated.

Interim facilities are used for the care and training of the retarded waiting admission to state institutions. Community programs and the use of group homes are expected to drastically reduce the waiting list, Mrs. Wohlgemuth said.

The independent review teams will evaluate the facilities on functional capacity to provide safe, healthful and socially desirable services; to program effectively in keeping with the individually defined needs of patients, and the potential for continued use for interim care purposes.

Consisting of not more than 12 persons, the review teams will include a county mental health and mental retardation program specialist, a Department regional institutional standards representative, a regional mental retardation specialist, a social worker and physician from the county assistance office, representatives of the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children and other parent and consumer groups, a community legal service representative, a representative of the Pennsylvania Association of Residences for the Retarded, and representatives of referral agencies.

Team members will attend training workshops prior to visiting the facilities.

Other phases of the Department's upgrading of services to the retarded include:

--Provision of educational and training programs to all school-age children under the jurisdiction of the Department in state institutions. The "Right to Education" court mandate will be fully complied with as the first program of its kind in the nation. The Department's activities in this area are carried out under the supervision of the Department of Education.

--Development of a new approach in the field of mental retardation at the Southeastern State School and Hospital, Philadelphia, in a joint arrangement with Temple University. The institution, scheduled to open next spring, will provide services for 360 persons with developmental disabilities and will serve as a training area for new career professionals to work with the handicapped.

--Utilization of federal funds for education in 10 community projects for infants and toddlers who are mentally retarded, and their families, so that the families can also work with the children in their homes.

--Assignment of Dr. Marvin M. Malcotti, acting deputy superintendent of Pennhurst to the Regional Office in Philadelphia to be the full time director of Pennhurst dispersal under Dr. Charles H. Palm, Southeastern Regional Director for mental health and mental retardation, who has general operations responsibility.

--Transfer of 400 patients to Embreeville State Hospital, Chester County, including 15 crib cases, 20 geriatric cases and 80 more patients by Oct. 1 and the balance of the 400 on completion of Embreeville renovations scheduled for early 1973.

--Establishment of group homes in Philadelphia for 200 patients from Pennhurst and 200 from the community in conjunction with the city Mental Health and Mental Retardation program on a timetable for occupancy.

--Transfer of 150 patients from Pennhurst to the new Southeastern School and Hospital in Northeast Philadelphia after the opening date in spring of 1973.

--Acceleration of a General State Authority project for the construction of 150 modular units and an infirmary at Pennhurst, with construction requirements to be ready for review by the GSA Board at its September meeting. Special efforts will be made to seek a speedy completion of the project.

--Engineering work is being pushed for installation of air conditioning equipment in the Hyperactive Building at Pennhurst.

--Renovations to two Pennhurst patients' buildings for use in program and administrative activities.

--Resolution of legal questions on State operation of support services in county mental health and mental retardation programs in connection with a General State Authority project for small unit construction, designed to accommodate 900 patients in Philadelphia and in Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties.

--Establishment of the position of Mental Retardation Director at Embreeville to oversee the mental retardation program there; training Embreeville staff members to work with the mentally retarded; filling of two Embreeville board vacancies with persons interested in mental retardation, and joint meetings of the Pennhurst and Embreeville boards.

--Improvement of physical facilities at Embreeville including renovations to four buildings, with painting, to be completed by Oct. 1 and handrail and ramp installations to be started by Oct. 1. This will allow the establishment of a small modern facility for the mentally retarded at Embreeville.

#