

May 5, 1975

SUBJECT: NEWS RELEASE

TO: Mrs. Virginia J. Thornburg, Chapter President
ACC-PARCFROM: Mrs. Anna Belle Calloway *ACalloway*
Deputy Secretary
Western Region

There has been considerable speculation concerning the unrest at Western State School and Hospital in Canonsburg. For one week key members of my staff, appropriate people from the Central Office and I have kept the lines of communication open between the union leadership, hospital management and ourselves.

We are all rightly concerned about any conditions at Western that would create a climate unsafe for our residents and staff. Therefore, we have moved with all due haste to explore the problem areas and have come to an agreement as to how we might relieve the conditions which cause the unrest.

In a two hour meeting Saturday afternoon (May 3, 1975), the union leadership did not only give their word that they will not condone any strike action on the part of their membership, but that they will continue to seek, along with us, to find out where such unfounded rumors started. Training sessions to assist staff in working more appropriately with the very few residents who are suffering from unusual behavior problems will begin on Monday, May 5, and will continue for three weeks. Following the training sessions, the identified patients will be placed in a separate area where their program will be structured to meet their need.

I notified the Acting Superintendent, Dr. Ruth Scott last week that she had our approval to hire additional personnel immediately to replace the personnel that we will draw from other areas to begin the training program. Already we have 22 persons who have volunteered to work in the newly constituted area and would further encourage interested staff to apply for the training if they would like to work in the area.

Concerned parents should know that the Regional office staff and the union leadership are pleased that we have begun to jointly work toward a problem solution, as the health, welfare and safety of the residents and staff are our prime concern.

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