



ALLEGHENY COUNTY CHAPTER
Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens, Inc.
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*ACC-PARC Residential
CARE COMMITTEE*
POLK STATE SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL VISIT

MARCH 7, 1974

Present: Bob Nelkin, Ann Shord, Bob Matesic, Sally Hollyheld
and Ginny Thornburgh

Polk Staff: Dick Stater

Background

13 Team Program Unit Coordinators (such as Peg London in Gardenside)
Coordinators report to Referral and Placement Committee.

Their goal: a written plan, located on ^{the} one ward, for every resident -
by December 1974 - which is a current program/plan "renewable weekly."
It will answer the volunteer's or CCA's question: "What do I do with
Charlie today?"

Sunnyside (Male)

364 - Total population.

Unit I - Geriatric (60 years and older) The word "boy" or "kid"
used constantly instead of "man" by the staff.

93 beds

Activity: T.V. appreciated by some. One man coloring.

Unit II - Population 85

Again, the word "boy" used constantly in relation to these men.
Approximately 10 of these residents work off the ward.

C.C.A.'s Job - Cleaning - Clothes to fold - "Now, they're wanting
us to be working with the kids."



Unit III -

More active than residents of Units I and II.

Unit IV -

Population 85

Activity: Some residents coloring - good stereo - T.V. popular.

Walls in bedroom - pink.

C.C.A. reported that balls had once been allowed in the day room but had been removed due to the danger of breaking lights.

Sunnyside Summary

The potential for functioning outside an institutional setting of this group in general was great.

Wall to wall beds - no privacy.

Overcrowded.

No or minimal activity - no privacy.

C.C.A.'s acted as room guards rather than program or personal stimulators - little or no interaction.

50% of the 364 residents are off Sunnyside for an 8 hour day.

Juvenile pictures (e.g. ducks and pandas) on Unit I and IV windowshades.

General perception by staff that these were boys, not men.

Could staff turnover be reduced if they were made to feel more useful and creative?

Have drugs been reduced on this unit?

Residents and staff were open and friendly.

Almost all residents on Sunnyside are toilet trained (unlike Gardenside).

Chairs on Sunnyside are quite comfortable -- benches are unattractive and brutally hard.

Southside Parade

Occurs every day. All those who are not included in another program...The young women walk several miles each day and seemed in good spirits...Staff seemed positive about it also -- Both gain. Hurray! The newly installed "activity period" on each unit has potential.

Northside

Overwhelming feeling of great ability and competence of these children--Do they belong in an institution or do they belong in a community school?

3:15 p.m. Return from school. Potential abuse situation - Mr. McCord. At the time of our visit - 3 child care workers to take care of 50 boys (Unit II - 7 to 16 years; and Unit IV - 14 to 18 years)

25 boys live and sleep in the same room. (Cottage II's bathroom was being renovated.)

General feeling: These 50 boys should have been outside running and/or playing ball.

Gardenside (Female)

- A. Under 21
- B. More emotionally disturbed
- C. Aid cottage
- D. Older, generally "easier"

Terrible odor throughout . CCA's felt that cages are more humane than tying residents to benches. "Things haven't changed."

Dress Tremendous challenge of women's clothing on this unit. Dresses appear to be used for toileting and diapering ease, although most residents do not sit becomingly in dresses. Slacks would be more appropriate. Has creative thought been given to the design of clothing for those women who seem to want to take all of their clothing off?

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Quiet Rooms How often are the quiet rooms used and for what purpose? Since they are used, why are they not made safer (e.g. pipes cover, sharp edges remove from grates, etc.)?

A resident had been put in a quiet room at 3:30 p.m. and at 4:40 p.m. had not yet been checked. How often and what is the nature of the check required? Do quiet rooms work to change behavior positively? What alternatives to quiet rooms do the C.C.A.'s have at their disposal?

GT:jm