



Allegheny County Chapter

OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN, INC.

917-1001 BRIGHTON ROAD • PITTSBURGH, PA. 15233 • (412) 322-6008

President

Dr. Norman Mulgrave

Acting Executive Director

Ronald E. Archer

WSSH Grievance

Re: Edward B. [REDACTED]

December 17, 1973

We met with Dick Orlandi, social worker, at WSSH. At this meeting Mr. and Mrs. Flowers told of their complaints and Mr. Orlandi and I narrowed them down to 4 major questions. Then we met with Mr. Gallagher, the Director of the Social Service Department, Mrs. Percara, the Director of the Nursing Department, and Dr. Bradley, the Director of the Medical Department, Mrs. Buddemeier, the Pine nurse, and Juanita Wilkinson, the Pine IV attendant.

- (1) Did Dr. Hazlett give Edward mycoline after Dr. Chamovitz had reduced and discontinued this medication? Was mycoline having a negative effect on Ed? Did the mycoline cause these episodes which are considered seizures by the parents and acts by the staff?

By reviewing the medication chart it was obvious that Dr. Hazlett had reduced the mycoline in October and discontinued the mycoline in November. Only after the grand mal seizure on 12/12/73, did Dr. Hazlett reorder mycoline. Obviously, the mycoline did cause these episodes.

- (2) Are Ed's spells seizures or an act? Is there any possibility that they are seizures? If they are not seizures, what is the cause? If they are not seizures, how should the staff react to Ed?

Dr. Bradley stated it is a fact the EEG indicates a seizure pattern. However, Mrs. Percara told of an example when Ed was in these seizures, when he snapped out and gave orders which made sense during the seizure. Such behavior, she contended, would be inconsistent with the seizure.

Mrs. Percara and Dr. Bradley agreed to study Ed's behavior prior to, during and after the episodes and record them and to review them with Dr. Chamovitz.

- (3) Did Rich rough up, beat up, or hit Ed B. [REDACTED]? If he didn't, why would various residents state that he did? Was there a reason for the physical contact?

I interviewed Ed and it was clear to me that he had been touched by Rich Gullich. It was not clear, however, what was the cause of the incident or the nature. It was agreed that Dick Orlandi would interview separately one or two of the residents and gather his own opinion.

December 17, 1973

- (4) Why did Mrs. B [REDACTED] feel that it was necessary to "knuckle under" to Juanita Wilkinson? Does Juanita's attitude need corrected? Is it true that Juanita said, "Well, maybe I should 'get off the case'?" Did Mrs. [REDACTED] strike Juanita?

Juanita Wilkinson has a history of attitude problems with both staff, parents, and residents. It is clear that she said, well I could get off the case, but it is equally obvious that she could not without being transferred to another unit, very unlikely. Mrs. Percara said that she would deal with the case of Juanita and Rich. At no time did the Administration endorse Juanita's personality or record. I spent the last few minutes trying to make sure that Juanita would try to work with the parents. One of her statements was, "I don't think the parents will cooperate if Mr. Orlandi tries to restructure the relationship with Ed." I encouraged her to give them a chance.

Lastly, Mr. and Mrs. Flowers were concerned about possible repercussions for raising these issues. Mrs. Percara said it would be possible to have the nurse check more frequently on Ed's condition.



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Western State School and Hospital Grievance

Re: EDWARD B. [REDACTED]

Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Flowers, McKeesport (664-4504)

Ed was on the Pine IV unit at WSSH. He had been very well until Wednesday when he had a grand mal seizure.

Ed has a history of petit mal seizures.

Dr. Chamovitz, a neurologist, took him off mycoline. The other doctor, Dr. Hazlett, put him back on the mycoline. The family feels that the mycoline is causing these small seizures. The attendants feel that the seizures are faked.

Mrs. B. [REDACTED] charges that Rich, an attendant, is rough with Ed. She was told this by other residents. She was also told that Juanita, an attendant, never bought him food one day when he was in the quiet room. That Juanita, an attendant, placed Ed in the quiet room for his own protection during seizures.

I received this call on Sunday, 8:30 a.m. December 16, 1973. On Monday, December 17, the Flowers (Mr. and Mrs.) and I visited Western State.

12/20/73

BN/ps