

POLK STATE SCHOOL AND HOSPITAL

January 17, 1975 Visit

VISITORS:	Sally Hollyfield	Doug Spencer
	Midge Scannell	Ginny Thornburgh
	Anne Winkler	Jean Isherwood

Joe admitted to being forced to accept a new resident. This court directed admission created such a battle that Joe felt sure that he would end up being prosecuted for contempt.

Ginny offered to help, even to provide funds to hire a lawyer. Ginny asked that Joe contact us the next time that he is in this situation.

As a committee, I think we should go out of our way to stress our support of any superintendent who finds himself in this position. We must keep admissions to both Western and Polk at zero.

We must also keep on the Department of Welfare and get constructive action going on the disposal plan for Polk.

Joe feels his establishment of middle management staff positions is working out well. Now when there is a complaint, follow-up is immediate.

The program with Edinboro State College is ready to start this semester. The program is being started right at Polk for the staff to up-grade themselves. The program is being arranged so the staff working different shifts will be able to take advantage of it.

"We should watch this program closely." "The Home for Crippled Children" in Pittsburgh plans to establish a program for the residents at Polk. Staff will be trained to carry on the program when the Home for Crippled Children staff leave. This kind of program is desperately needed.

WOODSIDE: THE FIRST UNIT - 60 RESIDENTS

This unit has been renovated; walls have been painted, and new beds and population has been divided into two groups. The two large rooms were formally used as one for sleeping and the second as a day room. Now each room has about 30 residents and each room is used as both a sleeping room and a day room. There appeared to be less confusion. The staff ratio was 5 to 1 on one side and 7 to 1 on the other. More staff is needed for this new arrangement.

For at least one hour a day, all residents are taken to the activity room in the basement. (The cleaning is done during this time.) There is either music, arts and crafts, and other recreation. This is just a start; much more is needed. Also, there have been bus trips for this group of residents. For some, this is the first time they have ever had a bus ride. Some of the residents have been taken on Christmas shopping trips; another first.

The rest of Woodside is basically the same as before. There are a lot of carts and special chairs needed. Physical therapy is also needed. Some of this population will be among the Robinson Developmental Center residents. A lot of work is needed.

A barber was at work when we were visiting; he is new and staff is happy to have him, as he is more versatile than the staff.

PROJECT 81:

High functioning men; eighteen residents are involved. Each day, fifteen go to workshops or Goodwill. Three stay at home. These three are helped in learning basic skills such as counting money, cleaning house, cooking, laundry, etc. This group is being prepared for community living.

There was a kitchen, dining room, living room. The apartment was neat and clean, furniture old but useful, and there were houseplants in the kitchen. The sleeping arrangements were two to a room.

PROJECT 80:

This is a female counterpart to Project 81.

GARDENSIDE: WOMEN UNIT

There seemed to be less confusion then there had been on my last visit to this unit. The residents looked much the same; two were without clothing, same as last spring.

We were informed at the beginning of our tour, that restraints and quiet rooms were gradually being dispersed throughout the institution. Quiet rooms were being used for other needs, although the doors on some were still in place. Restraints are being gradually taken away. As the staff becomes more comfortable, more doors are to be removed and more restraints are taken away. Joe finds it difficult to dispense with all of these items at one time; staff morale dictates a slow approach to this.

Upon entering Gardenside, we found that a resident had been locked into one of the quiet rooms. We questioned staff and were told that she must have walked into the room, and another resident must have locked the door. Dick Slater, our staff person and guide, assured us that he believed the CCA's explanation; members of the committee questioned this situation. We requested that doors be taken down right away. Dick assured us that the order had already been given, and it was just a matter of time before the carpenter arrived with the proper tools.

On our way out of Gardenside, the carpenter was told to remove the door that afternoon.

NURSERY UNIT

The I.U. was on this unit working with children. This unit is one of the units which the Home for Crippled Children will be working with. A physical therapy program is needed badly.

Page 3
Polk Visit

The staff morale in this unit is a little different than in other units. There had been a training program here before and a lot of the staff voluntarily program the children. The I.U. and staff CCAs work closely here to continue programming all day long. Here as in other areas of the school, adaptive furniture and wheelchairs are needed.

WE RECOMMEND:

Getting staff persons assigned to I.U. #6 task force.

Sally Hollyfield
Chairperson
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