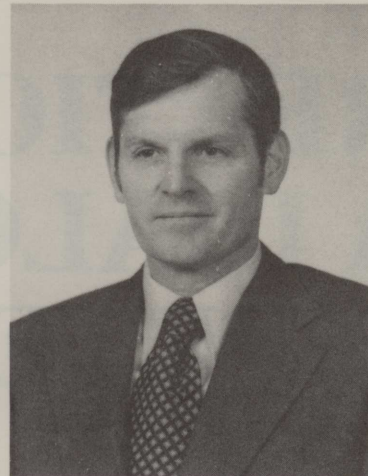




COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE  
HARRISBURG

FRANK S. BEAL  
SECRETARY



DPW  
CHALLENGE  
NOV-DEC  
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Each year the Governor of Pennsylvania designates November as Mental Retardation Month. This year, Governor Milton J. Shapp urged all citizens of the Commonwealth "to give full support to public and private efforts to provide all retarded individuals with the best possible opportunity to live and work in their communities."

In Pennsylvania, that statement is not a formality. It is the goal toward which the Department of Public Welfare's programs and services for mentally retarded people are striving.

Some 365,000 Pennsylvanians are mentally retarded, approximately 3 per cent of the population. The condition causes more disability among children than any other physical or mental abnormality.

Until relatively recent times, mentally retarded children and adults were often hidden from view—sometimes in institutions far removed from their home communities; sometimes in their own homes by parents who were reluctant to admit to having a mentally retarded child.

Mental Retardation is found in every community, in every racial and ethnic group, among the rich and poor, the educated and the uneducated. Wherever it is found, there is a need for services to help the mentally retarded individual learn the skills that will enable him or her to live with dignity and self-respect.

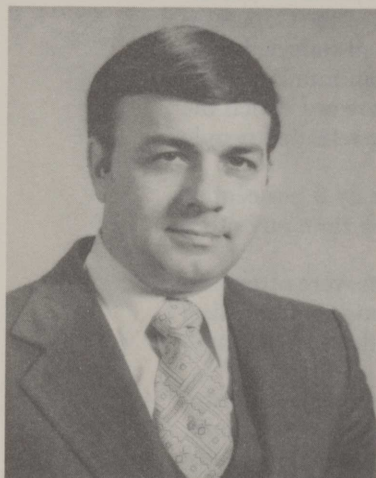
Today, many of the stereotypes about mentally retarded individuals have been eliminated. We know that the vast majority of mentally retarded people are able to live in the community, to work, to learn, and to participate in social activities.

This issue of Challenge discusses many of the programs and services that are helping mentally retarded persons and their families. In large measure, the success of these programs depends upon an enlightened community whose citizens are concerned and responsive to the needs of their mentally retarded neighbors.

*Frank S. Beal*

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Secretary

# DIRECTIONS- A DIALOGUE WITH PETER POLLONI



*(CHALLENGE interviewed Peter P. Polloni, Deputy Secretary of Mental Retardation for the Department of Public Welfare. Assuming his duties on March 21, Mr. Polloni brings to his position an extensive background and experience in the field of mental retardation. Mr. Polloni has served as director of the Bucks County Association for Retarded Citizens, the Montgomery County Association for Retarded Citizens and the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens. Mr. Polloni has served as a special advisor to the President's Committee on Mental Retardation and on the Governor's Task Force on the Right to Education.)*

**CHALLENGE:** What do you see as the most important goal for the Office of Mental Retardation?

**POLLONI:** I see the prime objective for our office at this time as the achievement of a uniform and continuous delivery system to serve the needs of each mentally retarded individual with the least restrictive and most appropriate program for that person. Thus, within a well-organized system, each person can move through programs and services according to his/her individual needs.

**CHALLENGE:** What steps are needed to help realize a uniform system for mental retardation services in Pennsylvania?

**POLLONI:** As stepping stones to a complete service delivery system, the Office of Mental Retardation is seeking the passage of three major legislative programs which will make available the most comprehensive services.

The first is the creation of an Advisory Board for Mental Retardation. This board which will have inherent within itself a strong expertise in the MR field, will be an active working board. They will deal directly with the main issues arising in MR. I see the Board working in an integral way with the staff of this office. We are seeking out members