



CONNECTIONS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

MAY, 1985

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE ISSUE

Assembly Select Committee Authors Services Reform Act

This summary was prepared by the Assembly Select Committee on Mental Health staff. It was distributed to the executive offices of various mental health organizations across the state to encourage their support of Assembly Bill 2541.

Assembly Bill 2541 by Assemblymembers Bruce Bronzan (D-Fresno) and Sunny Mojonier (R-Encinitas) is a major mental health reform act that establishes system priorities and creates innovative ways to serve the most severely ill adults and children.

The legislation is the product of the Assembly Select Committee on Mental Health's year-long study of mental health care in California. It is coauthored by the other members of the Select Committee and embodies the panel's major findings and conclusions.

AB 2541 meets the state's historic pledge to provide community-based care to the mentally ill, especially the types of people who used to be institutionalized in the large state mental hospitals. Tragically, severely mentally ill people today comprise an estimated 40% of the homeless in this state.

Coming after many years of legislative inattention to mental health, this bill provides the framework from which to create a significantly improved and better organized system of care for the mentally ill. However, it will take many years of continued legislative interest to bring the state's mental health system to the level

where it belongs.

AB 2541 creates an innovative program to provide basic social services (housing, food, clothing) to the chronic mentally ill—the people once housed in state mental hospitals but now left in the community to fend for themselves. The goals of these new "social support agencies" would be achieved through active local outreach to these people (many of whom are now homeless), redesigned financial structures to collect the Federal and state monies due these people, and ongoing advocacy on a continuous basis to help the clients survive in the community and to help them obtain mental health and other social services as appropriate for their individual needs.

AB 2541 places the county mental health officials at the center of decision-making about how and where to care for seriously emotionally disturbed children and adolescents. Currently, when a child is identified as being seriously emotionally disturbed and in need of some special placement, a multi-agency tug-of-war takes place, often without the input of mental health officials. This bill requires the county mental health director to be notified whenever a child is first identified as having a serious mental health problem, whether the child was first seen in the schools or was a ward of the courts, or juvenile justice, or social services.

AB 2541 further requires the county to assign a mental health case manager to follow each child from the start,

through his or her treatment and back to the family or other appropriate placement. The bill also requires county mental health departments to work with the schools in their county to arrange for more non-hospital treatment options for the emotionally disturbed children they serve.

AB 2541 provides funds to counties to divert the mentally ill petty offenders from inappropriate placement in local jails and to expand the mental health treatment being provided in the jails. In the absence of these programs, many mentally ill are put in jail for nuisance offenses when the best thing for them and for the community would be mental health treatment.

AB 2541 addresses the important issue of how to care for mentally ill criminal offenders after they come out of prison. Specifically, the bill allows the Department of Corrections to place such parolees in an intensive mental health program to help them make the transition back to the community and to reduce the threat of danger to the community.

AB 2541 gives the courts and mental health facilities the option of requiring someone to receive outpatient mental health treatment when they are being held involuntarily for treatment under the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act. Currently, people are either held in a locked, inpatient hospital setting or completely released, with no placement options available between

continued on page 6

An Informational Update

The following summary of legislative bills was written by MHA's Legislative Advocacy Committee. The Legislative Advocacy Committee consists of J.R. Elpers, M.D., chairman; Lila Berman; Lindy Graham; Steve Howard, Ph.D.; and Kay Slavkin. The Committee selects bills to investigate which they feel will have a major impact on mental health constituencies. The Committee will be recommending an active position on some of these bills in future issues of Connections.

SENATE BILLS

Senate Bill 155 (Petris) Amended 3/11/85

This is an important bill, close to the hearts of the California Alliance for the Mentally Ill. It would improve the rates in board and care facilities and, as amended, establish county systems to monitor and evaluate board and care facilities. We feel there might need to be amendments, but we are strongly in support of this bill.

Senate Bill 131 (Watson) Introduced 1/1/85

Senate Bill 845 (Presley) Introduced 3/5/85

Both of these bills mandate the establishment of statewide standards for comprehensive mental health services addressing both qualitative and quantitative matters. SB 131 basically is a reintroduction of Senator Watson's bill of last year. SB 845 is a more specific bill to accomplish a similar objective. Both of these bills are in direct response to the administration's reluctance to accept the California Model or establish a similar set of standards to ascertain what is truly needed to have a viable public mental

health system. (See accompanying article.)

Senate Bill 544 (McCorquodale) Introduced 2/25/85

This bill broadens the definition of conservatorships and should make it easier to place a chronic mentally ill person under a conservatorship.

Senate Bill 786 (Seymour, et al) Introduced 3/5/85

Requires the allocation of all augmentation funds to be based upon an Index of Relative Need so that eventually funding will be equitable throughout the state for mental health programs.

Senate Bill 822 (McCourquodale) Introduced 3/5/85

This bill would establish three pilot projects at the cost of \$500,000 each in Santa Clara, Sacramento, and Los Angeles Counties for the homeless mentally ill.

Senate Bill 902 (Robbins) Introduced 3/6/85

This bill would authorize a lifetime waiver of coverage of mental health services for persons with "significant pattern of usage of professional mental health services", thus making it easier to exclude the mentally ill from insurance coverage.

Senate Bill 1054 (Lockyear) Introduced 3/7/85

This bill will set up a system to move violent offenders from the prison system to the mental health system at the termination of their sentence. It clearly states the amenability to treatment is not required for the person to be transferred. The Legislative Advocacy Committee feels strongly that we must oppose any bill which places people in mental institutions who are not amenable to treatment.

Senate Bill 1296 (McCorquodale) Introduced 3/8/85

This is another bill that could place prisoners in mental health institutions as a condition of parole with extension of their commitment to the mental institution for additional renewals for one year periods.

ASSEMBLY BILLS

Assembly Bill 375 (Tucker) Introduced 1/23/85

This bill would require county mental health quality assurance systems that cover facilities serving conservatees involuntarily detained, including a system to monitor the medical regimens of those conservatees.

Assembly Bill 2181 (Bronzan) Introduced 3/8/85

This bill would require insurance plans and coverage for mental health services to meet specific requirements. It should be noted that this is the insurance program that was developed by the California Coalition for Mental Health. (see accompanying article.)

Assembly Bill 2541 (Bronzan/Mojonnier) Introduced 3/18/85

This bill is the long-awaited legislation emanating from the Assembly Select Committee on Mental Health chaired by Assemblyman Bronzan. It has many aspects and will undoubtedly go through considerable evolution before becoming law. At the present time the committee feels it would be best for this bill to become a two-year bill to allow adequate deliberation and consideration not only on what it now contains but perhaps on what it should contain. In any case, this is a very important bill for mental health and will require our careful deliberation and ultimately, we hope, strong support. (see preceding article)

If you are interested in obtaining a single copy of any of the bills described above, you can write:

Legislative Bill Room
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Indicate the bill by number and include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Senate Bills Mandate Statewide Standards For Mental Health Care

By J. Richard Elpers, M.D.

The need for statewide standards and goals for mental health care is being addressed by the legislature in two different bills again this year. Senator Watson (D-LA) has introduced SB 131 and Senator Presley (D-Riv.) has introduced SB 845.

Both bills mandate a task force to develop standards of care for persons with mental illness and provide for monitoring functions. Both bills emanate from the background work that has been done over the last several years by the "Legislative Work Group," developers of the "Model for California Mental Health Programs."

Connections feels that its readers may well want to know the background that has brought the mental health constituencies to this point.

This model, a comprehensive set of program descriptions including staffing patterns and anticipated costs, was developed beginning in 1979 at the request of Assemblyman Tom Bates, then Chairman of the Assembly Sub-Committee on Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities.

Assemblyman Bates asked the Executive Director of the Mental Health Association in California to put together a knowledgeable group of providers, professionals, parents and other constituency groups to ascertain what in fact was needed to have a competent public mental health program in California.

The Legislative Work Group decided not to devise a plan for individual programs in California. Instead they planned services for a mythical 100,000 population catchment area which would be assumed to have its fair share of wealth, poverty, minorities, age groups, etc. They also assumed that if the model were implemented, appropriate adjustments in resource allocation and program types would be made to accommodate the differences between the highly disparate communities in California.

Through the hard work and careful, complex negotiations of the Legislative Work Group, a definitive product emerged which has become known as the California Model.

The California Model defines a wide range of service programs which are interlocking in nature. It recommends a spectrum of care which provides services ranging from acute inpatient care through residential, day treatment, outpatient, rehabilitation, community support, etc., leading to restoration to the community and the achievement of the highest potential the person might have.

The committee produced a series of documents in draft form which brought considerable comment and discussion

throughout the state. The document is considered a dynamic one, subject to change and modifications as new information, knowledge and perspectives emerge requiring changing concepts and quantitative estimates of needs.

Demonstrating the Model's dynamic nature, even now the special needs of children and the elderly are being evaluated by a task force preparing for a May 9th meeting of the Legislative Work Group.

The California Model has been strongly supported by the California Conference of Local Mental Health Directors, the California Alliance for the Mentally Ill, The Mental Health Association, and many other groups. Most recently it was endorsed by the County Supervisors Association of California (CSAC). However, neither the Brown Administration nor the Deukmejian Administration have been willing to endorse the model. The apparent reluctance has been that accepting the model would define the level of need and thus require much increased funding for mental health services.

It is estimated by the State Department of Mental Health that the model, to be fully funded, would require an approximate doubling of the mental health budget. That might seem to be an extravagant request, but when per capita expenditures for mental health services in California are compared to those of other urban, industrial states, the budgetary requests seem much more appropriate.

The State Department of Mental Health has accepted many of the program definitions and service descriptions contained in the Model, but it has failed to come up with quantitative standards that can be utilized for statewide planning. Therefore, members of the Legislature continue to have many of the same concerns originally expressed by Assemblyman Bates, namely, how much is needed for what kind of services and serving what populations.

It is the hope of many people that the best aspects of SB 131 and SB 845 will go into the final Legislative product and achieve passage.

At the present time, California has 60 different local mental health programs with great disparities in both the amount of resources available to each and in the way those resources are utilized. While some variations is quite appropriate and easily explained by differences in geography, population, etc., the disparities are so great that they defy logic and can only be explained by issues such as historical evolution and local philosophic differences. In any case, it is quite clear that mentally ill persons in California do not receive equivalent care in all parts of the

state and rarely do they receive optimal services in any jurisdiction.

A highly decentralized, diversified mental health program, such as California's, requires standards and adequate allocations to ensure equal treatment of all citizens. This is doubly important when one considers the philosophy of the current administration: that mental health services, as well as all other human services, should be further decentralized to county control.

We thank Senators Watson and Presley for their efforts on behalf of persons with mental illness and sincerely hope that all members of the Legislature will share our concerns and see that an appropriate version of these bills does indeed achieve passage in this Legislative session.

The most recent complete version of the model is dated October 1983 and is available from the Mental Health Association in California for a reproduction/distribution cost of \$10.

Decision Reached In MHA vs. Deukmejian

In the case of The Mental Health Association in California, et al., vs. George Deukmejian, et al., a decision in favor of the state and county defendants was handed down in Los Angeles Superior Court on Monday, April 15.

The lawsuit was originally filed six years ago by the Western Center on Law and Poverty, with the MHA as an organizational plaintiff, in the realization that state hospitals had been radically de-populated without commensurate increases in local community programs.

The intent of the lawsuit was dual: to guarantee constitutional right of mentally ill individuals to receive treatment services in the least restrictive setting appropriate for each individual and to guarantee that the state did not additionally harm persons who had been hospitalized by not providing appropriate aftercare services. The suit was filed on behalf of mentally ill persons confined at Metropolitan and Camarillo State Hospitals and other mentally ill persons at risk of hospitalization.

A decision in favor of the plaintiffs would have forced the Governor to propose increased funding to community-based clinics, halfway houses, day treatment centers and out-patient centers as alternatives to treatment in an hospital setting.

CALENDAR

May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

South Bay Adult School: A class entitled "Stepfamily Dynamics" will be offered from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at Mira Costa High School, Room 3, 701 S. Peck Ave., Manhattan Beach. Marriage and Family Therapists Fran Louise Hill and Rachel Mand will be the facilitators for this class. They will address topics that are relevant to problems and for solutions in being a member of a stepfamily. The fee is \$22 and registration is required at the first class session.

Call (213) 325-3873 for information.

May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

Westside Community for Independent Living (WCIL): A support group for men with physical disabilities will meet from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at WCIL, 12901 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles. This ongoing group will be facilitated by Monty Clouse, Ph.D. and will deal with various aspects of life as a disabled person. Limited wheelchair-accessible transportation will be available for \$1, each one-way trip. The fee is monthly and based on a sliding scale.

Call (213) 390-3611 or (213) 398-9204 for information.

May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Family and Friends of the Mentally Disabled: The parents' group weekly class meetings will meet from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the First Methodist Church, Social Room, corner of Glendora Ave. and Hill St., La Puente.

Call (818) 961-8971 for information.

Families' Meetings

Alliance for the Mentally Ill (AMI) Chapters for families of mentally ill persons and other family support groups will meet as follows:

AMI-Long Beach will meet May 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the First Church of the Brethren, 3332 Magnolia, Long Beach. Caring and sharing will be held May 8 at 7:30 p.m. Leading the sessions will be Laurel Carr from the County Department of Mental Health.

Call (213) 430-4298 for information.

AMI-Van Nuys will meet May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 at 8 p.m. at the San Fernando Valley Community Mental Health Center, 6740 Kester Ave., Van Nuys. Judy Cooperberg, author of *Beyond Twilight*, will be the featured speaker on May 15. The topic of discussion will be anti-stigma and a sharing by Ms. Cooperberg of her experiences as a recovered mentally ill adult.

Call (818) 988-8050 for information.

Rio Hondo Mental Health Services Relatives Group will meet May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at 12000 E. Firestone, Norwalk.

Call (213) 864-2751 for information.

AMI-Glendale will meet May 7 at 7 p.m. at Verdugo Mental Health Center, 417 Arden, Glendale. Caring and sharing will be held May 7 and 14 at 6 p.m. at the Center.

Call (818) 842-5378 for information.

AMI-Pomona Valley will meet May 7 at 7:30 p.m. at Claremont Presbyterian Church, 1111 N. Mountain Ave., Claremont.

Call (714) 624-2549 for information.

AMI-Beach Cities will meet May 8 from 10 a.m. to noon at the South Bay Office of Mental Health Social Services, 19000 Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 302, Torrance.

Call (213) 772-2188 for information.

AMI-Southeast will meet May 8 and 22 at 5:30 p.m. at Augustus F. Hawkins Mental Health Center, Room 1119, 1720 E. 120th St., Los Angeles.

Call (213) 321-3799 for information.

AMI-Los Angeles will meet May 9 at 7:30 p.m. at Thaliens Community Mental Health Center, 8730 Alden Dr., Los Angeles.

AMI-San Gabriel Valley will meet May 10 at 7:30 p.m. at San Marino Community Church, 1750 Virginia Road, San Marino.

Call (818) 797-3562 or (818) 507-9645 for information.

AMI-Norwalk will meet May 14 at 7:30 p.m. at Norwalk-La Mirada Unified School District Administration Building, 12820 S. Pioneer Blvd., Norwalk.

Call (213) 864-4412 for information.

AMI-Westside and Coastal Friends will meet May 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Project Return Center, 1328 2nd St., Santa Monica.

Call (213) 395-8886 for information.

AMI-South Bay will meet May 20 at 7:30 p.m. at Torrance First Christian Church, 2930 El Dorado, Torrance.

Call (213) 412-2291 for information.

AMI-East San Gabriel Valley will meet May 23 at 7:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, corner of Hill St. and Glendora Ave., La Puente.

Call (818) 337-7439 for information.

May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Metropolitan State Hospital: an informational series for families of mentally ill persons will be held from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Metropolitan State Hospital, 11400 Norwalk Blvd., Norwalk. The topics will be: "Manic-Depressive Disorders & Other Psychoses" led by Jon Heiser, M.D., on May 2; "Surviving & Thriving with a Mentally Ill Relative," led by Christopher Amenson, Ph.D., on May 9; "Mental Health Law & Patients' Rights" led by Anna Nieto-Gomez, MSW, on May 16; "Conservatorship Issues" led by Eva M. Hardy, M.D., and Bob Baldwin, MSW, on May 23; "Planning For Hospital Discharge-Community Placements" led by Catherine Bernarding, LCSW, on May 30.

Call (213) 863-7011, ext. 224, for information.

May 4, 11, 18, 25

Teen Talk: This talk show will air 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. on KHJ-TV, Channel 9. The topics for May will be: "On Money and Gambling" and "On Child Abuse" on May 4, "On Child Abuse" and "On Acne" on May 11, "On Acne" and "On Living With Nuclear War" on May 18, "On Living With Nuclear War" and "On Summer Travel" on May 25.

May 6, 13, 20, 27

San Pedro Mental Health Services: "Caring and Sharing for the Families and Friends of Mentally Ill People," a support group, will meet from 7:15 to 8:45 p.m. at San Pedro Neighborhood Facility, Room 204, 769 W. Third St., San Pedro.

Call (213) 519-6101 for information.

May 7, 14, 21, 28

Westminster Center for Personal Development: "Group on Overspending Addictions", an ongoing support group for overspenders, will meet from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Westminster Center, 867 E. Atchison St., Pasadena. The group offers participants the chance to look into the reasons behind, the problems caused by and how to solve their overspending addiction. The fee is \$50 per month for individuals and \$90 per month for couples.

Call (818) 798-0915 for more information and enrollment.

May 10

Clinical Associates: This group of licensed mental health professionals will hold a seminar from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Clinical Associates, 15235 Burbank Blvd., Van Nuys. The seminar topic will be "Fear of Being Thin" with presenter Ronald Levine, Ph.D. Reservations are required.

Call (818) 997-1782 for information and reservations.

RCLC

The Regional Community Liaison Committees (RCLCs), the citizens' group presenting mental health concerns to the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health regions, will meet as follows:

Southeast Region RCLC will meet May 2 at noon at Roosevelt Park, Community Room, 7600 Graham Ave., Los Angeles. Call (213) 603-4884 for information.

Coastal Region RCLC will meet May 9 at 6:45 p.m. at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Conference Room eight-east, 1000 W. Carson St., Torrance. Call (213) 533-3154 for information.

San Fernando/Antelope Valley Region RCLC will meet on May 10 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Regional Office, 5077 Lankershim Blvd., Suite 400, North Hollywood. Call (818) 508-7800 for information.

San Gabriel Valley Region RCLC will meet May 14 at 6 p.m. at the Arcadia Mental Health Center, 330 E. Liveoak Ave., Arcadia. Call (818) 960-6411 for information.

Central Region RCLC will meet May 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the LAC/USC Medical Center Psychiatric Hospital, Room 2C18, 1934 Hospital Place, Los Angeles. Call (213) 226-5726 for information.

RCLC meetings are open to the public.

May 11

Pasadena Council on Alcoholism: "The Awareness Hour", a monthly meeting and seminar, will be held from 8 a.m. to noon at La Vina Auditorium, Huntington Memorial Hospital, 100 Congress St., Pasadena. The topic will be "Prevention In The Work Place" with guest speaker Lou Sanman of ABC Television.

Call (818) 795-9127 for information.

May 11

Portals House Socials on Saturdays Dance: This monthly get together will be held from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Wilshire Christian Church, 634 S. Normandie, Los Angeles. The socials are open to all board and care residents and community mental health clients.

Call (213) 386-5393 for information.

May 12

Southeast Region, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health: "A Healthy Mind: For You and Your Family" radio call-in talk show hosted by Julius I. Fuller, MSW, will air at 9 p.m. on KACE, 103.9 FM. The topic for this month will be the examining of sexually abused children with guest speaker Debbie Owens, a physician's assistant at Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital.

Call (213) 603-4885 for information.

May 15

Alcoholism Center for Women: "Women's Night At The Movies", an evening of films about women's issues, women's lives and by women filmmakers, will be held from 7 to 9:30 p.m. in the Norris Theater, University of Southern California (near the cross streets of Jefferson Blvd. and McClintock). The cost of the evening is \$3 per person, but no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Call (213) 381-7805 for information.

May 15

Los Angeles County California Support System Core Team: The Core Team will meet from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County, 930 Georgia St., Los Angeles.

Call (213) 738-4841 for information.

May 16

AMI-Westside and Coastal Friends: An ongoing sibling support group will meet at 5:30 p.m. at Project Return Center, 1328 Second St., Santa Monica. Mary Lee Westbrook will be the facilitator.

Call (213) 396-0135 for information.

May 16

Pasadena Mental Health Center: "The Ninth Annual Community Conference Of The Pasadena Mental Health Association" will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Pasadena Mental Health Center, 300 E. Green St., Pasadena. The theme for this year's conference will be "Therapeutic Interventions: State Of The Art" with keynote address made by Althea Horner, Ph.D., author of several books on psychotherapy. The fee for registration by May 6 will be \$20 for general admission and \$15 for students; \$25 for admission on the day of the conference. The conference is co-sponsored by Las Encinas Hospital.

Call (818) 798-0907 for information.

May 16, 17

The Beverly Hills Counseling Center and The Children's Justice Foundation: "Diagnosing Child Sexual Assault: Innovative Approaches in Medicine. Civil and Criminal Liabilities." This two-day conference will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days at Central Resource Room, 415 E. "G" St., Ontario. This conference is open to professionals interested in becoming more informed on the topic of child sexual assault. Presentations will allow for dialogue with the presenters. The fee for registration for the two days will be \$160. Early registration will be \$145.

Call (213) 556-4610, (213) 391-2420 or (714) 947-7314 for information.

May 18

The Mental Health Association in Los

Angeles County: "The Second Annual Project Return Walk-A-Thon", in celebration of "May is Mental Health Month", will begin at noon at the Federal Building, 11000 Wilshire Blvd., W. Los Angeles. The five and one-half mile walk will end at Palisades Park (on the corner of Ocean Ave. and San Vicente Blvd.), Santa Monica. Refreshments and doorprizes will be featured.

Call (213) 629-1527 for information.

May 19

Los Angeles County Psychological Association: "Teenage Suicide" is the topic of this informative presentation to be held from 3 to 5:30 p.m. at Thaliens Community Mental Health Center, 8730 Alden Dr., Los Angeles. Michael Peck, Ph.D., will be the presenter. In addition to the discussion, a champagne reception will be held to honor Dr. Peck's new book on the subject of teenage suicide.

Call (213) 477-0449 or (818) 905-0410 for information and reservations.

May 23

Mental Health Advisory Board: The board will meet at noon at the Hall of Administration, Room 739, 500 W. Temple St., Los Angeles.

Call (213) 738-4772 for information.

May 23

Project Return Center: "On The Edge", a film about families of mentally ill persons, will be screened at 7:30 p.m. at the Project Return Center, 1328 Second St., Santa Monica. Dr. Robert Liberman, the film's supervisor and site producer, will be on hand for discussion and to screen the film.

Call (213) 395-8886 for information.

CONNECTIONS

Staff: Linda Morris, Ann Stone

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The Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County is a non-profit, voluntary organization dedicated to the promotion of mental health, prevention of mental illness and the improved care and treatment of mentally ill persons. (213) 629-1527

Executive Director: Richard Van Horn

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Reform Act continued from page 1

these two extremes. Allowing out-patient/non-hospital care, when appropriate, creates treatment alternatives and provides a type of treatment which may be more effective than a hospital setting for many of the people brought in under LPS.

AB 2541 provides funding to counties to develop outreach and services to the isolated elderly. The elderly are often reluctant to travel to clinics or are too frail to leave their homes.

AB 2541 over three years increases the mental health dollars allocated to those counties now receiving less than their fair share of the state total. Currently, funds are distributed based on historical circumstances and political factors. As a result, many counties now receive far below what they need to serve their residents.

In addition to the areas discussed above, this bill does the following:

- 1) Expands peer-counseling of Vietnam veterans in homeless shelters,
- 2) Promotes self-help groups for mental health clients,
- 3) Expands training of teacher counselors who work with children,
- 4) Provides for treatment of juvenile sex offenders and victims,
- 5) Expands new public school curriculums on preventing suicide and includes information on mental illness,
- 6) Improves Medi-Cal reimbursements for children's services,
- 7) Determines the number and mental health needs of mentally ill prison inmates,
- 8) Creates a special populations task force to assess services and needs,
- 9) Examines the feasibility of diagnostic demonstration centers,
- 10) Provides state funding of research about mental illness,
- 11) Strengthens evaluation procedures for people held under LPS,
- 12) Expands Medi-Cal coverage of out-patient care.

In total, the bill appropriates just over 53 million dollars over three years. This money would fund programs which address the needs of the identified priority populations and

reduce the funding inequity between counties. Additional costs associated with the proposed system reforms and changes will need to be funded in the state mental health budget.

Beginning this year and continuing each year thereafter, funds should be increased until the system receives the resources it must have to serve the people of this state.

Growing political interest, expanded media coverage and the Governor's interest have substantially brightened the outlook for improving the mental health system.

The needs of our state's mentally ill citizens will not be met with one bill or one appropriation. What this bill does is reassert a state leadership role in developing sound mental health policy. While it will take many years to achieve all the goals for an improved system, we can begin now to put the house in order, to chart a clear course, and to start building for a much better future.

Informathon

A television cable Informathon, titled "Your Mental Health: Depression", will be coming to Los Angeles on Monday, May 13, from 6 to 8 p.m. Produced by the Lifetime Network in cooperation with the National Mental Health Association and the American Psychiatric Association, the two-hour program will offer expert advice and information on depression/anxiety in infants and toddlers, adolescents, adults and the elderly.

An "Informathon" is the name given to a block of cable television programming devoted to one subject with an opportunity for the viewing audience to call in with questions instead of pledges of money. The format will enable the general public to use a toll-free number to call a panel of physicians and other mental health professionals with questions while the show is on the air. The toll-free number is 1-800-828-LIFE. The show originates here in Los Angeles.

The program will be repeated Friday, May 17, from 9 to 11 p.m.; Sunday, May 26, from 3 to 5 p.m.; and Tuesday, May 28, from 7 to 9 a.m. These encore showings will not include call-in availability.

CSS Conference To Be Held In June

Irv Rutman, Director of Matrix Institute (Philadelphia), Sally Zinman, Editor of Madness Network News, and Ron Schraiber of the California Network of Mental Health Clients will be featured speakers at the **Community Support System Learning Conference: Winning Through New Partnerships**.

This conference, to be held June 6 and 7, at the Los Angeles Hilton Hotel, will also feature three series of thought provoking workshops on new approaches to community living for adults labeled "chronically mentally ill". One of the series of workshops will focus on model programs and systems from across the county.

A Community Support System (CSS) is an organized network of individuals and organizations committed to meeting the community living needs of people suffering from serious and persistent mental health problems. **Winning Through New Partnerships** is designed to educate mental health clients, professionals, family members, social service providers, and other concerned individuals on how CSS's work, and how they can be developed locally.

Registration is \$25 and includes lunch for both days. Scholarships are available to clients who register in advance. For information call Linda Wade at (213) 738-4991.

Legislators Honored By RCLC/AMI

A delegation of state legislators, county, and city officials toured three agencies in Central Los Angeles County, April 19, 1985.

The Central Regional Community Liaison Committee, which is a group of citizens who live or work in Central Region, and serves in an advisory capacity to Central Mental Health Region and its Director, Dr. Rodolfo Garcia; and Alliance for the Mentally ill, a nationwide organization of parents who have mentally ill family members, cosponsored the tour.

The tour highlighted three agencies that serve a diverse group of people that need mental health services.

The Agencies were: The Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic, an agency which serves abused and mentally ill children; Skid Row Mental Health Services, serving the homeless mentally ill in the Skid Row area; and Portals House Transitional/Residential Program which serves as an alternative to hospitalization for the severely mentally ill.

These agencies were recipients of augmentation funds in Governor Deukmejian's 1984-1985 Budget.

Weisburds Receive National Award For Promoting Community Mental Health

At the opening ceremonies for the annual meeting of the National Council of Community Mental Health Centers, film writer-producers Dan and Elaine Weisburd were presented with the Howard Safar Memorial Award for Outstanding National Achievement in Promoting Community Mental Health.

The husband and wife team, whose documentary, "Interrupted Lives", was narrated by Burt Lancaster and had multiple airings on PBS Television in 1984, used the occasion to announce new mental health media projects which they have under way. The couple have been very visible on network and local television programs as advocates for long-term mentally ill persons, one of whom is their eldest son.

In partnership with professor Dorothy Singer, of Yale University's Family Television Research Center, the Weisburds have acquired television rights to the magazine "Psychology Today". Preparations are being made for the program to be aired in an hour/weekly national syndication slot. Discussions have also begun with actress Marriette Hartley, who has expressed interest in filling the anchor

position for the show.

A Family Video Library, to be located in the 700 community mental health centers across the country, is also in preparation. The library will be set up so that family members may have access to needed information in a timely way to be of effective assistance to their mentally ill relative. The project will bring AMI (the Alliance for the Mentally Ill), the Community Support Program of NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health), and the members of the National Council of Community Mental Health Centers together.

"Suicide Intervention", a video based learning system, is another collaborative venture the Weisburds announced and will combine the expertise of the L.A. County Sheriff's Office, L.A. County Mental Health, Young Volunteers in ACTION and the Suicide Prevention Center. The learning system will be used to train jailers and juvenile detention officers in skills which are required to spot potential suicides and to take appropriate action to prevent them.

Major funding discussions for these and other projects are now in progress.

Project Return Celebrates With Walk-A-Thon

May is Mental Health Month and Project Return is celebrating with their third annual walk-a-thon.

This springtime event will begin at noon on Saturday, May 18, in the West Los Angeles/Santa Monica area.

Project Return is a countywide federation of 40 self-help clubs for recovering mentally ill adults. "People helping people help themselves" is their motto. Project Return is sponsored by the Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County (MH/LA), a private, non-profit service, education and advocacy organization.

The West Los Angeles Life Underwriters proudly sponsors the 1985 Project Return walk-a-thon for a second year. Charles Siebert, star of the ever-popular television series "Trapper John, M.D.", is the honorary chairperson.

The starting point of this five and one-half mile walk for mental health will be the Federal Building at 11000 Wilshire Blvd. in West Los Angeles. The walkers will travel down Wilshire Blvd. to Ocean Ave. and turn north on Ocean to Palisades Park (located at Ocean Ave. and San Vicente Blvd. in Santa Monica.) At the end of the walk, there will be a celebration picnic for all walkers at Palisades Park featuring refreshments and door prizes.

The walk-a-thon will benefit Project Return and is designed to raise community awareness during this special month for mental health.

All interested persons are welcome to share in the exercise and fun. Sponsors for walkers are needed. Contributors are asked to sponsor a walker for a specific amount rather than the usual per mile pledge associated with most walk-a-thons. Any walker who is sponsored for \$20 or more will receive a Project Return sun visor.

For further information on the walk-a-thon, to sponsor a walker or to make a donation, call (213) 629-1527 or write:

MHA,
930 Georgia Street,
Los Angeles, CA 90015.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

**The Mental Health Association in Los Angeles County
and
The Members and Staff of
PROJECT RETURN CENTER
cordially invite you to an
OPEN HOUSE
Friday, May 10, 1985
4:00 - 7:00
at
1328 Second Street
Santa Monica, California
Hosted by AMI - Westside and Coastal Friends**

R.S.V.P. (213) 395-8886

Send to:
MHA
930 Georgia St.
Los Angeles, CA 90015

Name _____ of _____ Name of Club

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ made out to MHA Project Return. The person I am sponsoring is:

City _____ Zip _____

Address _____

Name _____ Phone # _____

Sponsor a walker or make a contribution to Project Return.

Help us celebrate "May is Mental Health Month"

PROJECT RETURN WALK-A-THON

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