

AMI Newsletter



ALLIANCE FOR THE MENTALLY ILL
of San Mateo County
(Formerly P.A.S.)

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FEBRUARY 1983

Meeting Schedule

Hrs 1-4 pm, Mon-Wed-Fri

FEBRUARY MEETING

Date: February 23, 1983
Time: 7:30 pm Open Board Meeting
8:00 pm Speaker
Place: San Carlos City Hall - Second Floor
Speaker: Mrs. Marge Unger
Private Occupational Therapist

See enclosed article for
description of Mrs. Unger's
work.

THANK YOU!

We thank those of you who have joined AMI of San Mateo or have renewed your membership. If you haven't already done so, please join or renew.

OTHER GROUPS

We enjoy receiving your newsletters and would like to continue to do so on an exchange basis.

Mental Health Meetings:

1st Wed. Mental Health Advisory Bd
Every Month 12:00-2:00 pm Multipurpose
Rm Hlth & Wlfr Bldg, 37th S.M.

3rd Sunday AMI of Napa State Hospital,
Music Room, 11:00 to 1:00 pm

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MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING 2/2/83

Of interest to AMI-SM members: There are openings on the MHAB at this time. Interested citizens may apply to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors for consideration.

The Guadalupe Center's Request For Proposal (RFP) is now out. Members of North County Citizens Committee (Region I) and the Geriatrics Committee of the MHAB have not yet seen the RFP. A meeting to do this is scheduled for Feb. 9.

Carolyn Patrick, San Mateo County's Patients Rights Advocate, spoke briefly on the impact of legislation AB 3454 which became effective January 1, 1983. This law requires a hearing within 7 days after a patient is detained on a 5150 - 14 day hold. (A 5150 hold may be placed on a person showing signs of being mentally disordered.) Two part time people have been hired by the county to assist Ms. Patrick in her added work load of arranging hearings as the new law requires. She reports that even with this new hearing process, very few persons won release from the

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14 day certification. She will return with a further report to the board on this matter in April.

The board voted to write to Senator Roberti, author of SB 141, which would change the present insanity plea from "not guilty by reason of insanity" to "guilty but insane". The letter will indicate that the board cannot support this bill as it presently stands. Members of MHAB expressed the need for further clarification on this very complicated issue.

Cordilleras report: General Services still have not installed the new hall lights, nor completed work on all the lockers as requested. The board will write a letter on these matters to General Services, with copies to go to the Board of Supervisors and to Jay Gellert, San Mateo Director of Public Health and Welfare, in an effort to remedy this unreasonable delay.

Director's Report: Dr. Haylett, filling in for Ms. De Luca, reported that Choche Hospital Emergency quarters renovation is in progress and should be completed in 18 months. Dr. Pritchard is pleased with the plans which will provide new accommodations for Conservatorship matters.

Choche Hospital has been undergoing a Medi-Cal audit; and it is estimated that 40% of present Medi-Cal recipients will no longer qualify under the new eligibility standards. Some patients who will qualify for the Short Doyle programs will no longer qualify for Medi-Cal funds to pay for their participation in said programs. This whole issue may have to be resolved in the courts.

Dr. Haylett gave a comprehensive report on the number of San Mateo patients now being cared for in out-of-county facilities. One member of the board asked why some of these patients are not moved to Cordilleras, which has a bed capacity of 120 and a current census of 113. It was explained that those patients in out-of-county skilled nursing facilities require a long-term, low expectation program that is not available at Cordilleras or any other San Mateo County facility. It was suggested that SNF patients should be systematically reviewed for possible improvement and placement at Cordilleras, just as Napa patients are reviewed every 4 months by county personnel with a view toward Cordilleras or out-of-county SNF placement.

For those wondering why Cordilleras does not have a long-term, low expectation program, the answer is that the RFP did not call for such a program. It was further stated that the reason San Mateo County does not attract

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private providers of long term, low expectation SNFs is due to the high cost of real estate and labor in this county.

The idea of developing a long-term, low stress ward and program at Cordilleras, to be housed in the now vacant first floor wing which until recently was used as the Coroner's Lab, was again raised. This appears to be a viable possibility that should be carefully explored on behalf of patients who now must live in out-of-county SNFs, far from family, friends and familiar surroundings. The MHAB expressed interest in studying this issue further.

Sue Miller - Observer

CORDILLERAS LIAISON MEETING 2/10/83

The current census was 108. Jay Gellert, Director of Health and Welfare, represents the conserved, replacing Mr. Jensen. The composition of the Liaison Committee was discussed. Evelyn Stanton has replaced Sally Mishkind as the Mental Health Assn representative.

Eight San Francisco hospitals have access to Cordilleras, however preference is given to San Mateo patients. In January 1983 there were 31 referrals and 18 admissions with 4 pending. 4 were withdrawn by source, 5 were rejected as unsuitable. Of 12 discharges, 8 went to home or board & care, 2 went AWOL, 2 to acute care. Average length of stay was 76.92 days. At discharge the Global Assessment Scale rating increased 9.83 points.

Gordon Cutts, Case Management, said the top priority was to get patients out of 1) Napa, 2) Chope 2N, 3) Cordilleras.

The February 1 Open House was attended by 53 parents, representing 25% of patients. Of those present, 16 indicated an interest in participating in an on-going family support group which will meet once a week.

Donations of washable, basic casual men's clothing is needed, (no suits). Women's clothing in large sizes and shoes are also needed.

Patients are allowed to go out to visit their own doctor if they are in good shape. However they must be maintained on Cordilleras prescription of medications.

Interest was expressed on a long term ward in the quarters formerly occupied by the Coroner. The space is pleasant and well-lighted and could accomodate 15-20 people.

Dorothy Texier
AMI Representative.

HELP NEEDED!

Can you spare two afternoons a month to help in the AMI office? If we are to keep the office open, we need help. Call Thelma Miller 591-1828.

MATEO LODGE & DEXTER HOUSE

The houses are doing well. Mateo Lodge has employed a new counselor. They still need carpeting and some bedside tables. For information or to visit, call:
Mateo Lodge - 365-7043
Dexter House - 367-9931
Ian Adamson 408-336-5336

Ian Adamson, Coordinator

CONFERENCE PLANNED

The California Alliance for the Mentally Ill is planning a conference, to be hosted by the Fresno and Visalia groups, and to be held at the Visalia Airport Holiday Inn, March 25 and 26.

SB 929

The pilot program to give extensive physical exams to mental patients is ready to start. Dr. Mahon-Haft, an outstanding internist and scientist, has developed the protocol for Napa State Hospital's study. Metropolitan State Hospital will also do a study. Dr. Lorrin Koran of Stanford has developed the protocol for the community study which will be done in Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito counties. The testing will be done by a mobile medical van equipped with an examining room, IBM micro-computer and medical instruments for carrying out a complete physical exam. The tests will be done in 20 or more sites in the four counties. Nurse practitioners will do the testing, with support from an on-site medical team including an internist, a neurologist, and a psychiatrist in each study county. All three studies will coordinate their findings.

Although the program is ready to start, a waiver to release funding was denied. An appeal has been made and the planners are optimistic that it will be granted.

PSYCHIATRIC MISDIAGNOSIS

According to an article in "Psychology Today", Dr. Robert Hoffman, a psychiatrist at the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco, studied 215 patients referred to the psychiatric clinic of a major teaching hospital by private physicians and psychiatrists, many of them on the hospital's staff.

Thorough medical, neurological and psychiatric examinations revealed that 41 percent of the patients had been misdiagnosed in ways that could make an important difference in treatment. The very medications prescribed by the referring doctors were found to cause some of the behavior syndromes.

Dr. Hoffman was quoted as saying, "the consequences in terms of medical care and institutionalization, to say nothing of the human suffering involved, are immense," if this rate of misdiagnosis prevails throughout the country.