

PAS Newsletter

Parents of Adult Schizophrenics
of San Mateo County

FEBRUARY 1982

P.O. Box 3333
30 West 39th Avenue
San Mateo, Ca. 94403
(415) 573-5345

Hrs 1-4 pm, Mon-Wed-Fri

Meeting Schedule

FEBRUARY MEETING

Date: February 24, 1982
Time: 7:30 pm

Place: San Carlos City Hall
666 Elm St., San Carlos

There will not be a speaker at this meeting in order to give members a chance to be heard. Please come to the meeting with your ideas for action.

If PAS is to remain viable, more people must become active. We need volunteers for the office, and we need to become more vocal and visible with local decision makers if we are to hold our own in this era of declining resources.

The Federal government is turning over responsibility for social programs to the State, and the State in turn, to the Counties. We have an obligation to let our local supervisors, legislators and mental health workers know what we feel is needed in San Mateo County for better care of mentally ill.

Let's do some planning.

Other 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 Assn for Mentally Ill Napa
Every Month State Hospital, Music Room
11:00 to 1:00 pm

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MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING 2/3/82

Two new members of the MHAB were introduced: Jane Lewis and Kathleen Delosza, both public members. Jane is a PAS member. Cynthia Hopper, is the new chairman of Direct Services on the Board. (Note: Tony Hoffman's board appointment has been renewed for another term.)

Ms. De Luca, Mental Health Director, gave a brief report detailing the 15 Mental Health Dept. layoffs which include, 5 social workers, 1 nurse, 2 psychiatric technicians, 2 mental health workers and 4 doctors.

She announced the appointment of Ken Wagstaff as State Mental Health Director. He has had experience in the State Mental Health Dept., and with MediCal.

Tony Hoffman reported on the case studies of 17 clients who have been in the San Mateo County Mental Health system for 5 or more

MHAB Continued

years. The study shows the revolving door syndrome at work, as patients "fall through the cracks", are lost sight of for a while, and resurface again and again in hospitals and/or jails. It is hoped that the Case Management system now in place will keep better track of chronic patients, with intervention in time to prevent recurring need for hospitalizations and police pick-ups.

AB7X: The unspent mental health funds that were included in this bill to be transferred to the general fund were removed from this transfer status, thanks to the outcry of many interested people, including our PAS members.

The Board will write a letter to the State, registering a complaint about the time-consuming and costly County Plan process. The money and personnel are no longer available in present budgets.

Cordilleras report: Judge Lanam has given approval for 100 patients. Mr. Loren Beckley, Monitor appointed to oversee the revamping of the Cordilleras program, will give a progress report in the Judge's Chambers on Thurs., Feb. 4, at 12 o'clock noon. Several PAS members will be present.

Mrs. Jane Kennelly, Conservatorship Investigator for San Mateo County, gave an informative report of her work. Under the Lanterman, Petris, Short Law, a person cannot be held in a hospital against his will for more than 17 days, without a conservator. (This period may be lengthened in a current overhaul of the LPS law.)

In response to a question of how a citizen can start the conservatorship investigation process, as provided by the law, Mrs. Kennelly said that a citizen who has cause to believe a person in the community is unable to provide for his food, clothing and shelter by virtue of suspected mental illness, may contact the regional Mental Health Division in which the suspected incompetent person resides, and request an evaluation of that person.

Region I includes Colma, Daly City, Pacifica, So. San Francisco, Brisbane - Director, Dr. Bruce Bess, 45 Southgate Ave., Daly City, Phone - 994-3030.

Region II - Burlingame, Hillsborough, Millbrae, and San Bruno. Director, Dr. Donald Newman, Peninsula Hospital. - Phone: 697-4061.

Region III - San Mateo, San Carlos, Belmont, Foster City, Miramar, Half Moon Bay, Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton, El Granada, San Gregorio, Pescadero. Director, Dr. Jackson Dillon, 3700 Edison, San Mateo. Phone: 573-3535.

Region IV - Redwood City, Menlo Park East, Palo Alto, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, La Honda. Director, Dr. I. Kamin. phone: 363-4111.

Sue Miller

CORDILLERAS CENTER

The census as of February 11 is 91, 13 of these are from San Francisco. Patient representative reports change for the better. More structure now prevents boredom and lying around. 10% to 20% have P (privilege) cards, which are earned by going to group meetings. 4 patients go to Voc. Rehab. but the 60¢ charge for ride by Redi-Wheels is a large expense for them.

Contracts are made between Cordilleras and patients prior to admission. At present 6% to 8% have contracts. The contract system is helpful for patients who need a demonstrated success.

Sally Mishkind, Mental Health Assn, at the Jan. 14 meeting, questioned why San Mateo County patients were placed in inferior "L" facilities in other counties, while Cordilleras has not been filled to its 100 allotment.

Lois Turner, MHAB, questioned how discharge procedure is handled.

Tom Mesa, Director, provided the following statistics at the Feb. 11 meeting:

During January 1982, 15 persons were discharged, 5 were placed in Board & Care through Case Management, 4 voluntary patients left against medical advice, 2 to acute care at Choep, 1 to home, 1 inappropriate referred to Case Management.

16 formal referrals were made to Cordilleras, 13 by Choep, 1 each by Peninsula, Sequoia, and Mary's Help. 12 were admitted, 4 given other clinical dispositions. Of those rejected, 1 was suicidal, 1 violent, 1 criminal, 1 acute psychotic to Napa.

Average age of patients is 18-44.

22 patients have been at Cordilleras from 2 to 3 years.

Cost of the facility per day is \$82, of this \$38 MediCal, \$44 Short/Doyle.

Gordon Cutts, Continuing Care Coordinator, reported 30 conservatees are out of county, 3 in sub standard facilities are being considered for Cordilleras.

Dorothy Texier

DONATIONS NEEDED

Mateo Lodge and Dexter House are in need of a firm twin mattress, towels, sheets, and a carpet approximately 20' X 25'. If you have items that you could donate, please call:

Ian Adamson, Coordinator, 408-336-5336, or Mark or Dan at Dexter House, 365-9453
Tony or Fidelina at Mateo Lodge, 365-7043

Ian reports that both houses are full and the clients are fairly well settled. However there are vacancies from time to time. If you are interested in a place for a family member, you can arrange a visit by calling the manager at either house.

FIELD TRIP

Every Wednesday, a 4 hour field trip is available to mentally disabled. A bus supplied by the County will pick up mentally disabled persons at various pick up points along El Camino. There is no charge. If you are interested, call Lois Joseph or Brian Conklin, toll free 363-4000.

The California Association, Families of Mentally Disabled Winter Conference will be held in Ventura, on February 19, and 20. Tony Hoffman will report on this meeting at the PAS February meeting.

JOIN PAS

We thank those of you who have joined PAS. If you haven't yet joined, please do so. Dues are for office, phone, newsletter and other printing, and mailing. All work is done by volunteers.

If you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, please drop us a card or call office.

The following is excerpted from THE MENTALLY ILL IN THE EIGHTIES, by Robert Sommer, Ph.D., and Humphrey Osmond, M.D.

Jurisdiction over the mentally ill is being transferred from the mental hospital system to the prison system, where it had resided over a century ago before the intervention of Dorothea Dix and other humanitarians. Jail and prisons across the nation are housing people who used to be sent to mental hospitals. Court decisions and legislative acts expanding the rights of state hospital patients will be not only meaningless but actively harmful if the net result is a massive transfer of people from the status of mental patients to that of criminals. While psychiatry's posture has not been especially edifying, lawyers appear to have acted even worse. Under the guise of protecting patients' liberties, they are subjecting them to imprisonment whose destructive effects on the human psyche have been well-documented for over two centuries. Added to this, the mentally ill on the streets are not producing greater tolerance for deviant behavior, but encourage clandestine reprisals and persecution. Attention must be given to those people formerly directed to psychiatric facilities who are now either turned away or trans-institutionalized. The mentally ill sleeping in doorways, panhandling and living in the sewers are mostly withdrawn, sad, and occasionally angry people. It does not take much psychological sophistication to see how such an individual could commit an outrageous crime in order to attract attention. All the reports indicate that the mentally ill are not adequately housed or cared for in penal institutions, and that they are worse off in prisons and jails than they had been in mental institutions. Their presence is also extremely disruptive for other inmates and on institutional routine. Besides the sheer time and effort involved in dealing with them, prison staff do not know how to handle the psychotic who is shunned, ostracized, exploited and occasionally brutalized by other inmates. As a priority issue, we feel that psychiatric reformers should direct their attention to the plight of the impaired street people and the mentally disturbed in jail.

The Corrections Dept. estimates that one-fourth of prison population is mentally ill.