

PAS Newsletter

Parents of Adult Schizophrenics
of San Mateo County

SEPTEMBER 1982

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

Hrs 1-4 pm, Mon-Wed-Fri

Meeting Schedule

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Date: September 22, 1982

Time: 7:30 pm

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

Topic: Planning for 1983

The September meeting will be a planning meeting for the following years activities. A nominating committee will be appointed to recommend a slate of officers for 1983. We need active members, please come to the meeting prepared to volunteer your services.

Tony and Fran Hoffman will report on the CAFMD Summer Conference in Anaheim, the August session of the legislature in Sacramento, and the NAMI Conference in Washington, D.C.

Congratulations to Pat Williams on her appointment by the Governor, to the Citizens Advisory Council.

Congratulations to Helen Teisher on her election to the Board of Directors of The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

* * * * *

MENTAL HEALTH NOTES

The Local Assistance Budget from the state will be reduced by \$15,200,000 in conjunction with program changes in the "Medi-Cal Reform" bill, AB 799, in 1982-83. Each county will have a cut in funding.

San Mateo County has made application to be one of the pilot project counties under the Medi-Cal Consolidation Pilot Project. Fee-for-service Medi-Cal in San Mateo County has been substantial. It goes mostly to hospitals and individual psychiatrists and psychologists.

San Mateo County is down to 52 adult patients at Napa, a new all time low. Although private conservators do have to approve changes in placements, it was noted in the 8/4/82 minutes of the MHAB that, "As hospital beds become scarcer, however, an increasing problem this year will probably be how to continue to move clinically appropriate patients to lower levels of care even when they and/or their families prefer the status quo."

* * * * *

CORDILLERAS

The five member Cordilleras Selection Committee (William Cunningham, Mary Janney, Sue Miller, Lore Radisch, Evelyn Stanton), made the following recommendations and conclusions:

1. We believe patients at Cordilleras are negatively impacted by the dark and gloomy environment created by poor light and dark wall and floor color.

We strongly recommend that the County replace the dark floor and walls with light colors and install fluorescent light fixtures in order to create a more positive patient climate.

2. In order to insure less disruption for the patients we emphatically support Telecare's proposal to maintain current staff. The Committee strongly commends the existing Cordilleras Center program staff for the development and implementation of an outstanding program under highly unfavorable circumstances.

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 Family Advocates for Mentally
Every Month Ill Napa State Hospital,
Music Rm 11:00 to 1:00 pm

* * * * *

NAME CHANGE FOR PAS

The Board of Directors of PAS decided to change the name of our organization to The Alliance for Mentally Ill of San Mateo County. It was felt that we would have better name recognition if we adopt the name of the Natl AMI. We hope to have the details worked out soon.

* * * * *

The California Association, Families of Mentally Disabled also decided to change their name, they now will be known as The California Alliance for the Mentally Ill.

* * * * *

UNITED WAY

The United Way fund drive is on. Remember that you can specify a non-profit agency as recipient of your donation, such as AMI of San Mateo County.

* * * * *

We are enclosing the agenda for the CAMI Fall Conference, Oct. 22, 23. We urge PAS members to attend.

Cordilleras Recommendations Continued:

3. A restructuring of the dining facility and methods of dietary supervision need to take place.
4. Recognizing the importance of a strong liaison committee, we recommend that those existing participating organizations select new members and provide in the future for a rotation process.
5. We recommend greater program use of the outdoor area with a need for supervision at all times emphasized.
6. We recommend that the contractor develop a simple residents orientation handbook outlining behavior expectations and rules and regulations.
7. We recommend that the County take leadership by affirmative policy or legislation establishing and implementing an accreditation process based on the private model such as in Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals mental health facility component (JCAH).
8. County needs to negotiate measurable outcome objectives with contractor.
9. We believe that 108 census is more realistic expectation that 115, at least in its first fiscal year of operation.
10. We recommend that a "primary therapist" for each patient concept be incorporated into the program design.

* * * * *

CORDILLERAS LIAISON MEETING 8/12/82 as reported by Tony Hoffman

Dorothy Texier was on vacation when the last Cordilleras Liaison meeting was held. I attended as PAS representative.

It was reported at the meeting that negotiations were under way with Telecare and it was hoped that a contract proposal would be ready for the Board of Supervisors about September 14th. A contract must also be negotiated with the union by Telecare.

It was reported that almost all of the employees, including management personnel, will remain at the facility and the patients should not be upset by change. The census was 102, with 5 or 6 from San Francisco.

I had lunch with the patients before the meeting and toured the facility after the meeting. It has been several years since I toured the facility and I observed changes, some for the better and some for worse. The lunch was very good. The facility was clean and orderly. The patients appeared to be clean and not over-medicated. The security and safety had improved but I was somewhat taken aback to find everything locked up. Patients are not allowed free access to the library, the recreation room or the courtyard. I was assured that patients do get outside almost every day, even those without a privilege card. In fact, some

were out on the front lawn with a technician at the time.

There are three levels of care/program but the expectations are very high even at the lowest level. As I see it, this is a serious problem. Many patients who need the facility for the basic necessities of life, including the safety and security of the facility, are denied admission because of the program. Even if they are admitted they are unable to meet the demands of the program, consequently their condition deteriorates and they are discharged.

This is very discouraging for those of us who worked so hard to make Cordilleras a reality. We expected a facility with enough flexibility in treatment and program to handle almost anyone. We expected it to be an alternative to the State Hospital, which it certainly is not at this time, for a number of patients.

* * * * *

From CAHF Long Term Care News 8/6/82

SCHIZOPHRENIA RESEARCH CENTER FOR CALIFORNIA.

. . .The Veteran's Administration has announced that a new Schizophrenia Biologic Research Center (SBRC) will be established in Palo Alto at the northern California V.A. hospital complex. Schizophrenia accounts for more than 17% of all veterans hospitalized in VA centers. The new center will focus on the classification of schizophrenia on the basis of biologic criteria. Scientists believe the disease to be a group of conditions rather than just one. The long-range goal is that the information they obtain will allow a more predictable outcome for whatever therapy is chosen to treat an individual patient. The new center will be funded for five years of research at \$1,199,200. The SBRC's will utilize support of extensive clinical and laboratory research available within the VA center at Palo Alto. Specialized tools include computerized axial tomography and nuclear medicine equipment to facilitate dynamic and metabolic brain imagery, and instruments and techniques for immunologic and pharmacologic screening. The new SBRC at Palo Alto will be co-directed by Philip A. Burger, M.C., and Walter T. Roth, M.D.

* * * * *

San Francisco Chronicle headline 8/14/82:
RUSSIANS WON'T LET WIFE SEE DISSIDENT

Moscow

The wife of the co-founder of Moscow's only independent peace group said she was barred yesterday from the psychiatric hospital where her husband is being held against his will.

Natasha Batovrin said in a telephone call to the Associated Press that she was refused entry to hospital No. 14 when she tried to visit her husband, Sergei, 25, an artist.

Maybe we should call the Associated Press when we are refused visitation rights at our own psychiatric facilities.