

EDUCATION, HEALTH, WELFARE & STATE  
INSTITUTIONS

January 27, 1977

The meeting was held at the Nevada Mental Health Institute in Reno at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 27, 1977, with Senator Jack Schofield as Chairman.

PRESENT: Chairman Jack Schofield  
Vice-Chairman Joe Neal  
Senator William Raggio  
Senator Wilbur Faiss  
Senator William H. Hernstadt

ABSENT: Senator Richard Blakemore

HOSTS: Charles Dickson, Nevada Mental Health Institute  
Tom Piepmeyer, N.M.H. Director  
Robert Hiller, Lake's Crossing Center for Mental Offender  
Ellen Pillard, Northern NV. Mental Retardation Center  
Robert Kieffer, Reno Mental Health Center  
Jack Mayville, Children's Behavioral Services

The meeting was brought to order in the Conference Room of the Nevada Mental Health Institute.

Tom Piepmeyer discussed with the Senators the difficulty of recruiting psychiatrists when the top salary available is \$38,000, and they can make up to \$60,000 as a practitioner in the private field.

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The tour began with the Neuropsychiatric Ward. Mr. Piepmeyer led the Senators through the genetics section, which is a lab and a clinic. Mr. Piepmeyer said this area contained three units, all of which were adults. Mr. Piepmeyer showed the Infirmary and said that this unit handled all physical problems unless they were too acute, and then the patient was taken to St. Marys in Reno.

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Outdoors, Mr. Piepmeyer pointed out the construction of the new building that was to be the Day Center which would contain the library, beauty shop, etc. The Director also said that some site-improvement was in process which was beneficiary to the patients because being outside gives them a sense of privacy.

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Mr. Piepmeyer entered the Geriatric program which houses thirty patients. This program is in a locked unit, which makes an attempt to have group discussions at least twice a day. This is done to get the patient to perceive some aspects of reality. This program also has community services

to nursing homes and private residences.

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The tour then entered the area for the Mentally Retarded where the most physically disabled were housed. Mr. Piepmeyer said that there was an attempt to dress the patients every day, and give them some concept of daily living. At this section, the Senators viewed the Foster-Grandparent Program in action. Mr. Piepmeyer said this program was a "life-saver" to the Institute, and there were 72 participants.

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Mr. Robert Hiller was the host at the Lake's Crossing Mental Offender Program. Mr. Hiller said that his patients were referrals from either the courts or the Nevada State Prison. Mr. Hiller said that his program has been operating since February of 1976, and will be expanding in July, 1977, to house 32 inmates.

Senator Schofield asked what was the purpose of the program. Mr. Hiller said that N.R.S. 78 stated that there would be accommodations for those not able to stand trial due to mental disorders. Mr. Hiller said that there is great turn-over in this program, and the usual stay is for three (3) months. Mr. Hiller said that he did have the option to recommit individuals to the Mental Health Institute, or if they are extremely dangerous they are released back to the prison. However, Mr. Hiller said their main goal is to place these inmates back into society, and some of the individuals with 'bad' backgrounds have returned to the community. Mr. Hiller said that the main emphasis of the program is placed on therapeutical discussions where the inmate has some input. Mr. Charles Dickson commented that there was a good staff/patient ratio in this program, (4½ staff to each person).

Senator Hernstadt asked if there were only male inmates. Mr. Hill said there were both female and male, and that currently there were 24 total patients.

Senator Raggio asked about the availability of recreation. Mr. Hiller said there was some volleyball and softball, but these activities required the presence of full staff.

Dr. Dickson said that they are working on an out-patient program to the Mental Health Institute, rather than have them return to the prison.

The Senators viewed the living quarters and recreation area of this program.

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Ms. Ellen Pillard of the Mental Retardation Center said that her program consisted of all ages, and was about 2/3'd involved in community programs. Ms. Pillard showed the Senators the two completely self-contained units which total 27 beds. However, Ms. Pillard said with day care available, as well as, weekend care, in 1976 the program served 56 people. During the time of the tour most of the patients were attending public schools.

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Mr. Ray Howard, Mr. Robert Keiffer, Ms. Dorothea McCarthy and Dr. William L. Kelly hosted the Senators at the Reno Mental Health Center located on Kietzke Lane and South Virginia in Reno.

Mr. Howard said that there were three main programs which were the Adult Services Unit, the Crossroads Program, and the Alternatives Program. Mr. Howard said there is currently in the Adult Services Unit 405 patients, which averages about 8 new cases per month. Mr. Howard said they also had an Outreach program. Mr. Robert Keiffer said their goal was short-term intensive treatment, and they only had about 12% recidivism, and they mainly return because of medication needs.

Dr. William L. Kelly said that drugs are mainly used as anti-depressants and anti-psychotic controls. Dr. Kelly said that he graduated from Michigan University, and worked for ten years at the John Hopkins Hospital.

Senator Neal questioned how many of the patients were on medication. Dr. Kelly said approximately 60 out of the 405. Dr. Dickson said that the Institution problem will not be solved until the staffing of the out-patient program is solved.

Ms. McCarthy who directs the day treatment Crossroads program said that they treated each patient with three people, i.e., a social-psychiatric physician, a medical physician, and a psychologist. Ms. McCarthy said that in 1976, 82 patients were in this day program. However, currently, this program is being phased out as the Rand Study made on the Institute said that more attention should go to the severely disturbed. Senator Neal asked if there was a specific standard to be achieved in mental health. Ms. McCarthy said that they were mainly concerned about community adjustment and survival. Senator Hernstadt questioned what would happen to the patients in the current day program. Ms. McCarthy said they would either be absorbed by other State agencies, or by the Washoe County schools.

Senator Neal asked if some of these illnesses were drug related. Dr. Kelly said that there has been a decline in drug-related illnesses since the 1960's, and he felt the children attempted this because they desired self-medication.

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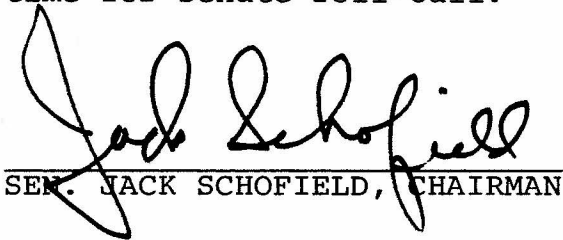
Mr. Jack Mayville hosted the Senators at the Children's Behavioral Services program. Mr. Mayville said that his program covered pre-school children, as well as, the ages 6 years to 12 years of age, and dealt with all ranges of disturbances.

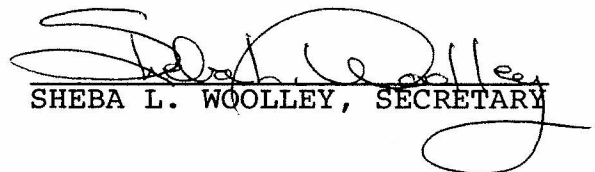
Mr. Mayville said they were having a building constructed which would require 26 new positions in staffing, and would have an extensive educational service which would be State certified. Mr. Mayville said that at this time they are dealing with out-patients only, and have two therapists and himself as staff.

Senator Hernstadt asked how many patients the program would handle when the building is completed. Mr. Mayville said approximately 500 families per year as out-patients, and there would be residency for 16 patients.

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The Senators returned to Carson City by 11:00 a.m. in time for Senate roll-call.

  
SEN. JACK SCHOFIELD, CHAIRMAN

  
SHEBA L. WOOLLEY, SECRETARY