

**CAMARILLO STATE HOSPITAL
CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA**

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL REPORT
TO
HONORABLE DANIEL ELAIN, M. D.
DIRECTOR OF MENTAL HYGIENE**

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MAY 1960

A great deal of thought and planning has been given to the proposed administrative changes, effective July 1, 1960, when patients will be admitted directly to the wards. It has been considered important that the Supervisors of the Ancillary Services, as well as the Nursing Service Supervisors and ward personnel thoroughly understand the new plan. They have been given free latitude to verbalize their feelings and thoroughly acquaint themselves with the proposed changes. It is anticipated that patients will be admitted to the lower ward for their initial interview, physical examination and diagnostic staff. His treatment program will be formulated also at that time. The lower wards will all have access to one of the small inner courts. When the patient is considered to be sufficiently improved that he can handle ground privileges, he will be moved to an upstairs ward, all of which will be open to the Central Court.

Open House was held on May 1, 3, 5 and 8 this year. There were 1,242 visitors. Eight different tours were set up, two to each Unit - with a separate tour of the bakery during the noon hour when the wards were closed for lunch. Many visitors came the first Sunday and returned the following Sunday to take the tours they were unable to get in the first one. There were many favorable comments made by the visitors such as "I was surprised to see the patients enjoying themselves"; "I am surprised at the relaxed atmosphere of the place"; "This place looks more like a college campus than a mental institution," etc. Many stated their impression of places such as this were formed from seeing suspense and horror stories on television involving a mental case. The committee felt that this year, more than ever, they were able to acquaint the public with the aims and goals of the hospital and to impress upon them the therapeutic aspects as opposed to the confining ones of a hospital such as this. They also felt that the visitors who came were sincerely interested in learning about the place and not just taking a tour out of morbid curiosity.

The Children's Unit: By and large our Children's Unit has functioned quite well during the past several months. Our school program has made great strides and has been fairly well stabilized. Most of our children spend the greater part of their time in a structured activity in the classroom. Our experiment with structured activity on the new receiving ward since its opening last January has been most encouraging, and demonstrates to us that even regressed schizophrenic youngsters can make progress. The children are almost continually involved in activity. Such a program requires that plans be worked out minutely from the time the child gets up in the morning until the evening, and that every hour is accounted for in some activity. It has been our experience that those very disturbed youngsters have made more progress in a period of six months than children theretofore who have been here for twice as long.

Considerably much less destruction has occurred on the Children's Unit during the past month than usual. There has been a trend in that direction in the past several months. We do not have nearly the destruction which we

had in the past, but a certain amount of nonconforming and destructive behavior cannot be avoided altogether. This also applies to running-away episodes which have been less frequent than in the past. Our youngsters participated enthusiastically during the Mental Health Week in showing visitors through the unit. They distinguished themselves by their good behavior and competency in dealing with the public. As a reward for this participation, our staff members gave a special party for the children, and they were individually thanked in a formal letter to each of them. This, also, was well received by the youngsters.

The big event of the month was the opening of the swimming pool. All cottages are using the pool to full advantage. It is the most popular activity, and difficult behavior always diminishes when the pool is open. Nursing Services is staffing the pool on week ends. Now that the evenings are long, hikes, hill-climbing and baseball are keeping the youngsters busy.

I.D.S.O donated baseball equipment in large quantity to GU-3, the boys are delighted and practice constantly, and are hoping to join the "Little League."

On May 20, a decided change was noted as one looked about the hospital grounds; all of the male patients strolling about were neatly clad in khaki trousers and striped seersucker shirts, instead of the faded blues usually worn. This change of apparel did a lot for the morale of the patients and many favorable and interesting remarks were heard from the patients. At this point there is not a sufficient supply of khakis and striped shirts to maintain this "new look" but as rapidly as possible they will replace the "blues" which have been standard apparel since the hospital opened in 1936, -another milestone achieved.

The corpsmen from the 355th General Hospital Reserve Unit spent their second day in clinical experience on the medical and surgical wards on May 22, 1960. Approximately thirty men worked on the male wards. The Reserve technicians in special areas, such as hydro, X-ray and laboratory were assigned to those departments. One and a half hours of film and discussion were held in the afternoon. Mr. David White, reporter from the Oxnard Press Courier, interviewed Dr. King, the Unit's public relations officer, and took some pictures of the corpsmen working on the wards.

Unit II Club: An evening activity program has been in operation approximately two months and is proving to be far more successful in patient interest and therapeutic value than was originally anticipated. The club meets nightly in the Ward 10 dining room and is under the management of the Unit II patient committee chairman and other officers. There is a variety of entertainment offered, such as cards and other games, music, colored slides, travelogue, occasional outside entertainment, and on Saturday night women guests are invited and there is dancing. This club is operated principally for the patients who are not yet able to take part in off-ward

entertainment. The patients are required to dress for the occasion and if they should appear in their work clothes the patient committee requires them to go back and dress properly for the occasion. The club has become so popular that at times some are turned away because of lack of space.

Respectfully submitted

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MEDICAL DIRECTOR