

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH
INCORPORATED

THIRD MEMORANDUM ON SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Following on previous visits of inspection in 1962 and 1963, members of the Community Education Committee made their 1964 visits to Parkside, Enfield and Hillcrest Mental Hospitals in May and June. Included in this report also, are the improvements made up to October 1964.

ENFIELD

Noted with approval:

The very real interest of senior nursing staff who accompanied Dr. Grivell and our party. The golf course, the zoo, and the barbecue site owe much to their initiative.

Plans for new dining room and kitchen - to be built shortly. All patients will eat in a central dining room and present ward dining rooms will revert to recreation.

One extra bath and one extra shower for each 25-bed ward - to make two baths and two showers for each of these wards.

Resident quarters of nurses and medical officers have been improved.

New Outpatients Clinic to be built soon.

New occupational therapy centre to be built after new dining room.

The appointment of a Senior Clerk and the inclusion of a Senior Male Nurse in the staff establishment.

But, on the other hand

Present occupational therapy centre will be transferred to temporary quarters half its present size during the next two years.

There would seem to be work for at least one Professional Social worker and a few Mental Health Visitors.

PARKSIDE

Noted with approval:

Increase in staff: 3 occupational therapists, amenities officer, catering and cooking staff, domestic staff (releasing nursing staff for nursing).

Non-psychologically trained staff now also attend clinical discussions.

One art therapist and one speech therapist now shared with Hillcrest.

Hospital canteen now staffed by the hospital (previously privately leased) and profits used for amenities and equipment for patients.

Verandah of women's and men's OB wards now enclosed as pleasant sun rooms. Air-conditioning, floor coverings, new bathing and toilet facilities in wards for the intellectually retarded.

Special daily activities for teenagers. More bedside lockers installed. The hospital now has a bus for patients' outings (the joint effort of Commercial Motor Vehicles, Adelaide Rotary, the Women's Service Association, and the Mental Hospital Auxiliary) and facilities for electric light cricket (the joint effort of

the Mental Hospital Auxiliary, the Women's Service Association, and business houses). The Mental Hospital Auxiliary has also presented more play equipment for children.

That a chapel is to be built at Parkside. The hospital already has a chaplain working half-time.

When the hospital training centres for the intellectually retarded at Elinora and Strathmont and the geriatric hospital at the east end of the Parkside grounds are established, the existing Parkside Hospital can be re-developed to provide for the mentally ill. It is to be hoped these new projects will receive early attention by the Parliamentary Public Works Committee.

But, on the other hand

The clerical administrative staff of 12 seems to be the bare minimum required for a 1500 bed hospital. We understand that some delays in rectifying deficiencies have been caused through the hospital not having enough administrative staff to process the work. With patients spending shorter periods in hospital, more out-patients, and more community activity by staff, it is desirable that sufficient secretaries and clerks be provided. This will also be necessary for creating the establishments for the new intellectually retarded hospitals at Elinora and Strathmont.

While a start has been made with heating in the wards, there are areas yet to be covered.

More adequate lighting of the Hospital grounds is needed. This would further promote night visiting of patients.

The hospital staff speak highly of the work already being done by the Public Buildings Department. However, there are many minor structural alterations to be done. At present these must go through "all the channels" and decisions are made by people remote from the Hospital who are not in a position to know latest requirements. This could be overcome by the appointment of a maintenance supervisor who could be responsible for minor works and who could be a liaison officer between the Hospital and the Public Buildings Department. It is understood that there are maintenance supervisors at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

HILLCREST

Noted with approval

Increase in staff: two psychiatrists, one physiotherapist, one occupational therapist, one supervisor for industrial therapy, one amenities officer, one art therapist and one speech therapist shared with Parkside. Two aides for occupational therapy have been added to the staff establishment.

New centre for industrial therapy.

New school buildings and six teachers for retarded children.

A hairdressing centre for women.

That a chapel is to be built at Hillcrest.

Four parties of 20 patients each have recently had a week's holiday at the National Fitness Council's camp at O'Sullivan's Beach.

But, on the other hand

A centre for communal activities is needed - as use of the hall and stage in

Ward 9 is limited by the needs of the geriatric patients of that ward.

The hospital needs a full-time chaplain.

The hospital needs more social workers (1 at present for 900 patients) and occupational therapists (1 O.T. and 2 aides at present).

Our remarks about the need for more clerical staff and a maintenance superintendent at Parkside Hospital apply equally to Hillcrest.

GENERAL

The need for after-care of ex-patients was mentioned in our 1963 report, and it is as urgent as ever. It is therefore pleasing to note that 10 Mental Health Visitors are now being trained by the Mental Health Service and will start work with ex-patients about April 1965. We are also glad to note that the Government has bought a former motel as a hostel for ex-patients, and we trust that other government hostels will be established in due course. The need is great.

The need for more occupational therapists in all hospitals - and especially in mental hospitals - has been stated often. Unfortunately there are no arrangements for training occupational therapists in S.A., and interstate training involves a living allowance for several years, as well as fees. We wish the Occupational Therapists Association of S.A. well in its efforts to start a training course here and suggest that the S.A. Association for Mental Health might approach the O.T.A. and ask if there are ways in which we can help.

The need for some weekly payments to patients of Hillcrest and Parkside Hospitals has been raised previously. A proposal is now before the appropriate government authorities and we trust it will be sympathetically received. The fact that ex-service patients receive pensions, while others receive nothing, makes the situation seem most unjust.

The Chaplain has an important part to play in the healing team in a mental hospital - and the plans for chapels at Hillcrest and Parkside pose the question: where are the full-time Chaplains we need? Hillcrest has several part-time Chaplains but no full-time Chaplain, and Parkside has one Chaplain half-time and several part-time Chaplains. Victorian mental hospitals of comparable size to Parkside have four full-time Chaplains who are, moreover, paid by the State Government. The solution, of course, lies as much in the supply of Chaplains as in the possible financial provision for salaries.

We have noted the need for more professional social workers at Hillcrest and the inclusion of a social worker on the Enfield staff. Even Parkside, with three social workers, has about one-third the number of social workers which a general hospital of the same size would have. We realise that it is one thing to increase staff establishments and another to obtain the staff, and we trust that the Director of Mental Health will consider the possibility of future trainees from the Mental Health Visitors course working inside the hospitals under suitable supervision. Such arrangements can of course only be a compromise until more social workers are available.

More voluntary visitors to the mental hospitals are needed. A list of present opportunities to help is available from the office of the S.A. Association for Mental Health, 51 Grenfell St., Adelaide. Hillcrest particularly needs volunteers in Children's Ward 11 and Men's Geriatric Ward 9a.

December 2, 1964.

C.R. Lawton,
Chairman.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH INC.

FOURTH MEMORANDUM ON SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Members of the Community Education Committee made their 1965 visits to Parkside, Enfield and Hillcrest Mental Hospitals, and St. Corantyn Day Hospital in May and June. They report as follows.

ENFIELD

While we were glad to note that the social worker at Hillcrest Hospital now spends some time each week at Enfield Hospital surely this cannot be regarded as entirely satisfactory for Hillcrest (which has previously had one full-time social worker) or for Enfield. Fortunately a number of Mental Health Visitors are now working under the direction of this Social Worker but the time needed for supervision is of course a further call on this professional worker's time.

Apparently not all the extra showers and baths approved for the 28-bed wards (men's and women's) - see our 1964 Memorandum - have been installed. For one ward of 28 women there is only 1 shower and 1 bath. Light fittings could be improved in all wards and bedrooms. However, rubber mattresses are now in use on all hospital beds and the 28 bed men's ward in the west wing is being divided into more intimate areas by the use of wardrobe units as partitions. The large women's ward in the East Wing remains to be divided in this way.

HILLCREST

Patients are still having the chance of a holiday at the National Fitness Council camp at Aldinga and the beauty parlor is enabling many women patients to realise that their time in hospital need not prevent them from taking the same interest in their appearance as they would at home. However, the Hospital's Liaison Officer (Mr. Olson) would be glad to have further offers of help from ladies hairdressers in providing this service. Volunteers are also needed to give advice on make-up.

Large wards, which were typical of earlier hospital building, always give the institutional atmosphere, and Hillcrest - like the other mental hospitals - has such wards. Wards 1, 2, 3 and 6A would be more attractive if they were divided into more intimate areas by using wardrobes and dressing tables as dividers - as has been done in Ward 4 and in one of the wards at Enfield. A number of the wards are being painted but Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, 6A and 6B do need some covering on the cement floors of the corridors. Curtains and pictures on the walls would also improve the rather drab appearance of some of these wards. More day room space is needed in Ward 6B.

Two extra male nurses have been requested for supervision of industrial therapy in Ward 1. As occupation is particularly needed in this ward of severely retarded patients it is to be hoped that this extra staff will soon be approved and employed. When looking through the retarded children's wards one can never fail to be impressed by the service given by the nurses. We were glad to note that a sun room is to be built for Ward 12. The retarded children's wards would be glad of gifts of soft toys and used exercise books - for use as scrap books. For industrial therapy done outside retarded wards a new building is now needed for the increasing amount of contracts being obtained through S.A.A.T.M.I. Ltd.

While it is pleasing to note that there is a prospect of a full-time chaplain to the hospital being appointed by the Anglican Church, it is all the more disappointing to record that tenders so far received for the proposed chapel (around £100,000) are about twice the sum estimated for this work by the Public Buildings Department. In these circumstances a contract has not been let.

Hillcrest has the services of some of those who have been trained in the two courses for Mental Health Visitors (organised by the Mental Health Services), but we again complain that a hospital of 900 beds should have more than one professional social worker. A bus is now available for patients' outings thanks to the generosity of Commercial Motor Vehicles Ltd., money raised by the Hillcrest Hospital Volunteers, and a subsidy from the State Government.

PARKSIDE

Since our 1964 visit 3 occupational therapists, a handicraft instructress and 2 trainees, and a supervisor of industrial therapy have been added to the staff establishment. The employment of Mental Health Visitors has been partly responsible for the drop of 30 to 40 in the average number of patients 1430 in 1964/65. But while physiotherapists have been added to the staff establishment, there have been no applicants so far, for these positions, and meanwhile part-time physiotherapists are coming to the hospital - principally to help retarded patients.

Ward X has a new pantry and more training facilities available for retarded children and Wards K2 and K3 - for older retarded patients - have new floors and furniture, pantries and air-conditioning. Ward remains a maximum security ward for the criminally insane - as the building planned for such prisoners at Yatala is not yet ready. Our remarks about the chapel for Hillcrest apply equally to the chapel planned for Parkside. It seems strange that there should be such a lack of interest by builders in these two jobs. A number of patients have enjoyed holidays at Aldinga Y.W.C.A. Camp and the Macclesfield camp of S.A. Youth Clubs.

Plans for a new kitchen are being considered by the Public Works Committee and plans are being drawn for a new Pharmacy and a Nurses School. There has been some improvement in the heating of wards but the steam heating system is not yet operating in all buildings. Better lighting is still needed in the hospital grounds and sign posts are another outstanding item of maintenance. Lawns are now established around most buildings and a barbecue donated by the Thebarton Lions Club (on the eastern side of the

hospital oval) provides a pleasant change of setting for a meal. Hospital laundry will be much more adequately handled in the new government group laundry which has recently opened.

ST. CORANTYN

We were particularly interested to inspect this new Day Hospital - opened in January 1965 - with a staff of psychiatrist (in charge), matron, 2 nurses, handicraft instructor, social worker, gardener and kitchen staff. Patients attend daily, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and live at home. All staff (except gardener and kitchen staff) act as a therapeutic team and are responsible for a number of patients during the daily programme of group therapy, outings, discussions, games, and craftwork. There has been an average daily attendance of 24 patients since the hospital opened. The building - the former house of Sir Lavington and Lady Bonython on East Terrace, Adelaide - has been converted to its present use with care and taste. The former stables are now a well-equipped workshop for crafts.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

We were glad to note the following improvements to S.A. mental health services generally.

- I. The State Government has allocated £10,000 for the financial year 1965/66 to enable small payments to be made to those patients performing hospital duties. In view of the fact that most patients receive no social service payments of any kind during their time in a mental hospital, this payment - although not applicable to all patients - will bring self-respect to many who feel that this discrimination in welfare services is humiliating. The Government is to be congratulated on making this decision and no doubt thanks are due to many who have worked to achieve this decision, not least the former Director of Mental Health.
- II. It is pleasing to note that in accordance with a Cabinet decision of September, 1965, maintenance superintendents are to be appointed to decentralize the work of the Public Buildings Department for groups of Public Hospitals outside the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. A maintenance superintendent will have responsibility for maintenance at Hillcrest Hospital, Morris Hospital, Enfield Hospital and Yatala Labour Prison; and another maintenance superintendent will be responsible for maintenance at Parkside Hospital, Magill Wards of the R.A.H. and the Reformatory. While each superintendent will be responsible for a number of hospitals, he will at least be the authority to decide on day to day maintenance, the provision of steam, treated water, furnishings and equipment, and minor renovation or additions which are within the capacity of the particular hospital maintenance unit.
- III. Another property - "Carramar", Greenhill Road, Eastwood - has been bought by the State Government for use as an initial hostel for ex-patients of mental hospitals. When the house is fully

- converted there will be accommodation for 25-30 patients who will be able to live there for up to three months while seeking employment.
- IV. Senior psychiatrists of the Mental Health Services are now conducting out-patient clinics each month at Berri, Port Augusta and Mount Gambier.
- V. Retarded children's wards at Parkside and Hillcrest have been gazetted as such by the State Government, and this now enables payment of Commonwealth social services benefits for these children.
- VI. A second training course for Mental Health Visitors was held during 1965 and a further 10 trained officers are now assisting the social workers of the various mental hospitals - particularly in the after-care of ex-patients.
- VII. With the appointment of a Deputy Director with special responsibility for the intellectually retarded, a survey of the intellectual state of retarded children in S.A. is being made. A separate enquiry is being made into autistic children and the Dental School of the University of Adelaide is doing a survey of dental health among retarded children. Another investigation is being made with a view to ^{the} need for family planning in families having retarded children. A physical education instructor for retarded children has been appointed and a social worker and a psychologist have also been appointed to assist in this research programme.
- VIII. As previously no medical records have been kept in the mental health services it is pleasing to note that a special medical records clerk has now been appointed.

While we are glad to note that a geriatrician has also been appointed to the mental health services, we would point out the need for plans for the proposed Geriatric Hospital in the Parkside Hospital grounds to be pushed forward. It is equally important that the plans for the new centres for the intellectually retarded at Elinora and Strathmont be proceeded with at the earliest opportunity if the staff at Parkside and Hillcrest Hospitals are to have a more appropriate number of patients and if the treatment of all patients - the mentally ill, the intellectually retarded, and the aged - is to be both more specific and more readily available to the many who are in need.

C.R. LAWTON
Chairman
Community Education Committee.

December 6, 1965.