

Community Boards Handle Mental Health Problems

By ELMER E. WHITE
Michigan Press Association
Attention to mental health problems at the local level brings together the many people involved in the public interest professions.

Under the 1963 Community Mental Health Services Act, 12-member boards are provided to administer programs in individual communities or for counties or groups of governmental units.

The most likely representatives on these boards, according to the Michigan Society for Mental Health, are members of the clergy,

medical and legal professions, general hospitals, schools, public health, public welfare and citizen organizations.

WORKING IN CONCERT, such individuals can design a mental health program to fit the particular needs of the community the board serves.

For example, a community mental health board might contract with the psychiatric unit of a local general hospital to provide inpatient, short-term inpatient service for the acutely mentally ill.

State funds would match the community expenditures if such a program met state standards for service.

The board might also find an entirely new service is necessary to meet the community's needs. In this case also, if state standards were met, up to 60 per cent of the cost would be paid for from state funds.

THE BEST ESTIMATES available indicate that as many as 75 per cent of the acutely mentally ill can be saved from long-term state mental hospitalization if intensive inpatient services are provided at the local level.

Communities already are spending money on mental health because each county is responsible for the first year cost of an individual hospitalized in a state institution.

UNDER THE new act, officials estimate much of this money could be put into the community programs because of the anticipated decrease in state commitments if local facilities were available.

Individuals and groups which urged passage of the new law this year expect widespread participation by communities. They predict, on the basis of experience in other states, that Michigan might cut its mental hospital population by 50 per cent in 10 years because of the new law.

A possible side effect of the new Community Mental Health Services Act could reflect on the State Civil Service Commission.

DURING 1962, the commission reported 33.8 per cent of all state employees were working in the mental health field. This was the largest single employer in state government, with some 10,400 workers.

The second largest employer was the combined services of health, welfare and employment security agencies, which had nearly 6,500 employees during the same period.

During the year, state employment averaged 21,407 workers. Presumably a reduction in the case load at mental hospitals would result in a decrease in mental health employment. The employment reduction probably would not be as great, however, because currently mental health officials say the hospitals are understaffed for the work load.

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Southfield Firm Sued by Employees

A suit for \$1186.51, plus interest and costs, against Arthur C. Lynn and Mrs. Arthur C. Lynn, both individually and jointly as copartners doing business as Lynn's Excavating & Grading Co., 22056 Telegraph, Southfield, was filed with U.S. District Court in Detroit.

The action was taken under the Federal Wage-Hour Law on behalf of three employees by Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz through solicitor of labor Charles Donahue. The complaint alleges that the company failed to pay these employees the required time and one-half pay rate for hours worked in excess of 40 per work week during different periods in 1961 and 1962.

LEGAL ACTION followed an investigation of the firm by the Detroit East Offices of the U.S. Department of Labor's Wage-Hour and Public Contracts Divisions under the supervision of Arthur H. Buchman.

The firm is engaged in business as an excavating and grading contractor in connection with the construction, repair and improvement of interstate instrumentalities including roads, highways and streets.

Buchman noted that beginning Sept. 3, 1963, the Federal minimum wage for employees engaged in interstate commerce, or in the production of goods for commerce, will be advanced to \$1.25 an hour. The Fair Labor Standards Act also requires the payment of time and one-half pay to these employees for hours worked over 40 per work week.

Mackinac Bridge Walk Planned for Labor Day

The sixth annual Mackinac Bridge Walk scheduled for Labor Day morning will have two added attractions for those who make the 4 1/2 mile trek over the Straits this year.

First, with the walk going from south to north this year (the direction alternates annually) alert St. Ignace businessmen will give away to bridge walkers more than 100 prizes valued at up to \$100. Prizes will be awarded on a lucky number basis. In addition, transportation will be provided free from the bridge toll plaza to downtown St. Ignace.

Second, the Mackinac Island passenger boat lines are scheduling special trips directly from St. Ignace to Mackinac City so that bridge walkers can enjoy a boat ride as well as a hike across the Straits.

TRADITIONALLY, the Labor Day Walk is the only time pedestrians are permitted on the Mackinac Bridge. Last year more than 4,000 persons from babes-in-arms to octogenarians took part in what has become the world's greatest walking event.

The activities will commence early Labor Day morning with the annual 4 1/2 mile Championship Mackinac Bridge Walking Races, sanctioned by the Michigan Amateur Athletic Union.

Trophies will be awarded in the men's, women's, boys' and girls' classifications. The events will be followed by walking races for nov-

ices, sponsored by the International Walkers Association, and medals will be awarded to winners.

The general walk for those who do not wish to race will start promptly at 10:15 a.m. at the Mackinaw City (south) end of the bridge. Free bus transportation back to the starting line will be available for all those who complete the walk.

Canadians celebrate the birthday of their confederation on Dominion Day, or Canada Day, July 1. On that day in 1867, the British North America act, creating the Dominion of Canada, was proclaimed.

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