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Title:

Broadcast - ALP re mental health facilities (Manuscript)

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25/3/59

Good evening. In 1955 as the Chief Clinical Officer of the Victorian Mental Hygiene Dept, Dr. Stoller, made a report to the Commonwealth Minister of Health on the mental health facilities of the States of Australia and suggestions as to needs. A ~~or nearly~~ four years have now elapsed since this report. I think it would be a good idea tonight to deal with its comments & recommendations concerning S.A., & ~~also~~ see how far they have been met to date.

There are three main institutions in S.A. for the treatment of mental illness. They are at Enfield, Northfield, & Parkside.

The hospital for acute admission, early treatment & ^{general} reception is at Enfield.

Dr. Stoller recommended in respect of this hospital that it should be developed as a training centre for community workers in the field of mental health. That has not been done. There are ^{few} ~~the~~ community workers in the specialised field of mental health organised in S.A. A ~~se~~ group of voluntary workers at Northfield hospital have not received encouragement from the Dept. of Health, although encouraged by the staff of the hospital. Dr. Stoller also recommended more accommodation for physical & social therapy at Enfield & for out-patient activities. Although the present activity at Enfield includes some physical & social therapy, no provision whatever has been made for outpatients activity. The provision of an outpatients department is an essential part of mental health provision - this is not only the view of the doctors but of patients themselves. If outpatients

Treatments were available to sufferers from mental illness, many of the cases which now require hospitalisation would almost certainly now require it as they could gain assistance in the early stages of their complaints. That this need is keenly felt may be evident from the fact that I have in my possession now a petition seeking the establishment of an out-patient clinic at Enfield signed by ~~some~~^a hundred ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~patients~~ present patients! These patients have written to me:-

That they are only a few of the people concerned must be obvious, ~~but~~ since the most recent surveys of mental disease in capitalist countries has shown the incidence of it at the present to be about one in 20 people, and the last report of the Director-General of Mental Services for S.A. on Mental Hospital shows that 8.4% people in every 10,000 were ~~admitted~~^{admitted} to mental hospitals in that year - more than 2 1/2 times the no. admitted in 1943. So for this the govt. has taken no more steps to make provision for this vital treatment facility.

In report of Parkside Mental Hospital Dr. Stoller recommended that it was of prime importance to cut down overcrowding & step up the levels of psychiatric treatment including social therapy & group psychotherapy. It is true that building has gone on since at Parkside & our letters are not a

Good as they were, however, the staffing of this
 other mental hospitals is insufficient
 to provide treatment of the standard contemplated
 by the Stoller report, overcrowding continues,
 & social therapy & group psychotherapy programs
 remain at a minimum. Dr. Stoller
 added "An outpatient clinic is a vital
 necessity" This, as in the case of Enfield
 a dream.

Dr. Stoller commented that Northfield
 had no clearly defined role, but might
 develop as a center of treatment for the
 Northern Jubilee. He pointed out that
 gaps from the clinics at the R.A.M.
 & children's hospitals, there were no
 outpatient clinics. There still are
 none. Little effort had been made
 to train community workers in the field
 of mental health. No real effort is
 made even now. He pointed the need
 for an in-service trained professional
 workers. These remain totally inadequate
 in number for the task which faces us.

Let us turn to another matter raised
 by the report, to do with the report of the
 Superintendent of Mental Hospitals -
 the problem of alcoholism.

Alcoholism is today recognized as a
 disease - it is a very real scourge to
 many families. It affects by anyone who
 walks in on the melancholy procession
 of drunks through the prison courts
 with literally hundreds of convictions
 for over offenses. If they get drunk when
 out of work or before they have paid

powering firm they are sent to goal. There stands
no treatment for them - & when they come out
they move on for then and are soon back in
court for drunkenness again. Now it
is true, that Detention is available for
them who voluntarily will undergo it.

At Northfield Hospital Hospital a patient
by name a voluntary patient for treatment
for alcoholism, & at the Ashbury Road
of St. Albion the Dr. Johnson is
doing magnificent work. But many of
them need the assistance of compulsory
treatment. We have an Executive Act
in the States under which a Court can
commit people to an involuntary institution
for compulsory treatment when they have
become habitual drunkards. But -
there is no such institution. For six
years now I have regularly raised this
matter in the house, but could do the
govt has done nothing about it.

Dr. Stoller commented in 1995 that he
was informed that new legislation was
to be brought to deal with in alcoholism.
To date none has appeared.

Now it is unfair of anyone to expect
of Govt. that everything which has
to be done will be accomplished
immediately if not soon. It is
however, fair to expect that when
needs are forcibly brought to their
attention, they should be dealt with
within a reasonable period. Unfortunately
in S.A. in the field of social services,
reasonable speed in dealing with chronic

problems is lamentably lacking. ~~The~~ It is
not for lack of money - the Board Commission
has reported that regarding foreign part
we have spent less of Wallace's hospital
~~than~~ per head of population than
any other State in the Commonwealth.

I very much fear that we are not
going to see the necessary developments
in our social services ~~part~~ until
a change of administration takes place.
But in the meantime it behooves us all
to keep pushing apart these things -
will you help?
Good night.

The Building for such Clinic would not need to be ^{the} huge but should be built with the object of extensions at a later date. The reason for the Clinic would be to interview new & past patients and new patients who were in need of a doctor's advice and treatment in the early stages of their illness an increase in staff to cope with the extra work would of course be essential we feel if such Clinic was brought in to being many people would be saved from a serious breakdown such as most of the present and previous patients had experienced and had to fight their way out of it. We feel such Clinic would be ~~beneficial~~ to the Community as a whole such Clinics in other parts of the world have proved of immense benefit to their communities and we feel it could apply here also.

Records kept.

Present Staff of Doctors (four) and dealing with as much as they can handle.