

CHAPTER 26

Facilities for the Mentally Retarded*

Note: This chapter consists of two parts: I. Community Facilities for the Mentally Retarded and II. University-Affiliated Facilities for the Mentally Retarded.

I. COMMUNITY FACILITIES FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED

INTRODUCTION

Mental retardation has been defined as impairment of ability to learn and to adapt to the demands of society.

The first step in developing programs for the mentally retarded in the United States was taken in 1848 by the opening of an institution in Massachusetts. Similar institutions were shortly established in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Connecticut, and Kentucky. In 1876, a founded what is today known as the American Association on Mental Deficiency.

Special education classes for the mentally retarded were established in Providence, R.I., in 1896. These classes in public schools for the most part, for the mildly retarded. It was not until the 1920's that classes were introduced for the moderately retarded.

Parallel with developments in education for the retarded came new in the institutional field. Colonies were organized for the twofold purpose of moving part of the population in overcrowded to cheaper quarters in rural areas and of utilizing the adult for work on farms owned by the institutions and in domestic type jobs within the facility.

Public concern over the problem of mental retardation has increased over the past 10 years. This concern was reflected by the ment by President Kennedy in October 1961 of a panel of out- consultants with a mandate of preparing a national plan to mental retardation. The report of this panel, "National To Combat Mental Retardation," published in 1963, was mental in pushing the problems of this handicapping condition to the forefront of national interest and attention. From this interest stemmed increased activity at all levels. The Mental Retarda- Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction of 1963 (Public Law 84-164) authorizes grants for construction of centers; grants for construction of community facilities for the treatment, and training of the mentally retarded; and assistance

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