

The ultimate purpose is the "improvement of the mental health of the people of the United States" (National Mental Health Act of 1946).

2. Operation

A wide range of methods is used including: Consultation with State and local programs, operation of demonstrations and pilot projects, conferences to communicate new knowledge (technical assistance projects and research utilization conferences), scientific reviews of current knowledge, program research and evaluative studies, surveys of State programs, and the administration of the mental health project grants programs, including hospital improvement projects.

A staff of national experts in mental health services and mental health program administration is located in the headquarters office. The staff includes consultants specializing in the following areas: Clinical facilities, social psychiatry, child mental health, aging, alcoholism and drug abuse, crime and delinquency, and mental retardation.

The mental health project grants program (title V of the Health Amendment Act of 1956, Public Law 911) makes grants for "investigations, experiments, demonstrations, studies, and research projects with respect to the development of improved methods of diagnosing mental illness and for care, treatment, and rehabilitation of the mentally ill, including grants to State agencies responsible for administration of State institutions * * * for developing and establishing improved methods of operation and administration of such institutions." The two parts of this program are (1) the "comprehensive" mental health project grants and (2) the hospital improvement project grants program. Both grants programs are viewed as vehicles for program development in mental health services.

The "comprehensive" mental health project grants (\$18 million in fiscal 1966) provide support for a wide range of program studies, experiments, demonstrations, and operational research projects designed to develop and evaluate improved methods of care, treatment, and rehabilitation of the mentally ill. The program supports community services, including projects concerned with prevention and with new psychosocial and psychoeducational approaches to mental health services. Emphasis is on experimentation with and demonstration of new program ideas, systems, and techniques and on the application of new knowledge from the behavioral sciences.

Among the major program areas supported are: (1) Alternatives to institutional care; (2) new techniques of prevention and rapid treatment, such as early case finding, crisis intervention, short-term therapy and family therapy; (3) innovations in services for the aged, alcoholic, and drug addict, delinquent and mentally retarded; (4) multipronged approaches to mental health problems of low-income groups; (5) epidemiologic and evaluative studies; (6) new therapeutic services for children and adolescents; (7) experimentation with new ways of utilizing mental health manpower, particularly nonprofessionals; (8) new methods of organization, administration, and coordination of existing resources which move toward a continuum of care through prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation.

The second part of the mental health project grants program is the hospital improvement project grants which also has an allocation of