

Saint Elizabeths Hospital

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MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM—PATIENT TREATMENT AND CARE

PART I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

1. Objectives

The primary purpose or activity of the mental health program at St. Elizabeths Hospital is the treatment and care of mentally ill patients and the rehabilitation and return to community life of as many such patients as possible. Closely related to the treatment program are extensive research and training activities.

2. Operation

The provision of patient treatment and care includes medical, nursing, and related services, along with the necessary administrative, maintenance, and dietary support. This program operates under an annual congressional appropriation for the operation and maintenance of the hospital, which is supplemented by reimbursements, primarily from the District of Columbia and certain Federal agencies, for patient services furnished their beneficiaries. Reimbursements also include, to a small extent, receipts from miscellaneous other sources such as cafeteria sales, sale of scrap, etc. The hospital operates under an indefinite appropriation, under which it receives, in appropriated funds, an amount equal to the difference between reimbursements actually received and the total program costs approved by the Congress. Charges to the District of Columbia for patient care are based upon a day rate comparable to per diem costs of mental hospitals in the upper 10 percent of the States. The difference between the rate charged and the actual daily cost of care is paid from the hospital's direct appropriation, and represents the cost differential between the provision of care by a quality State institution, as opposed to a national demonstration center. The direct Federal appropriation also finances the cost of care rendered certain Federal patients who are not beneficiaries of other agencies, 40 percent of the hospital's training program, and all of its research activities. Training and research will be discussed as separate programs.

3. History

St. Elizabeths Hospital was established by the act of March 3, 1855, Rev. Stat. paragraph 4838 (1875), 24 U.S.C. 161. At that time it was known as the Government Hospital for the Insane. It acquired its present title by the act of July 1, 1916, paragraph 1, 39 Stat. 309. In 1940, the functions of the hospital were transferred