

One of the major deficiencies are the transitional resources, or the halfway houses, or the facilities that are involved in the third part of H.R. 15758. But the social workers attempt to make a plan for outpatient care, referral to other agencies for more intensive care or long-term care in the State hospital, and so forth.

An emergency diagnostic center might be another way of putting it.

Mr. ROGERS. So they can then be referred from there if they need long-term care?

Mr. PITTMAN. Yes.

Mr. ROGERS. Do you have any difficulty in getting them into long-term care?

Mr. PITTMAN. Yes, sir. We have had extreme difficulty in getting long-term care for some of these patients because they are at the bottom of the economic ladder, and their conditions are extremely complex. But that has improved dramatically since the State division of mental health has become involved in this particular project. Their facilities are now available.

Mr. ROGERS. Could you give me a typical case that is brought in? How long would he stay in emergency?

Mr. PITTMAN. Approximately 24 to 48 hours in the emergency unit, approximately 4 to 6 days in the ambulatory part.

Mr. ROGERS. Did I understand you to say this is voluntary?

Mr. PITTMAN. No, it is run by the police, so it is not voluntary. It has taken the place of the drunk tank. Instead of taking people to the jail—

Mr. ROGERS. Instead of that you bring them here, so it is not really voluntary, then.

Mr. PITTMAN. No.

Mr. ROGERS. Suppose they were to leave?

Mr. PITTMAN. If they leave against medical advice, the procedure is presently no prosecution of the summons. In other words, if they leave, then we emphasize the voluntary aspect within the police procedure.

Mr. ROGERS. So there is nothing to compel them, then, but if they go through this procedure, the case is not—

Mr. PITTMAN. Not heard in court.

Mr. ROGERS. Is there any procedure where you wait until there is a clearance given by the doctor and then dismiss the case?

Mr. PITTMAN. If they remain in the center, the summons is automatically canceled.

Mr. ROGERS. Suppose they leave. Would the case be prosecuted?

Mr. PITTMAN. It could be, but it is not.

Mr. ROGERS. As a matter of fact, you don't.

Mr. PITTMAN. No; we don't.

Mr. ROGERS. Is this tied in with a community health center?

Mr. PITTMAN. Originally, it was not, and it was necessary to energize the community mental health center to become involved. It is now partially supported by the State division of mental diseases in Missouri, and this required the mobilization of community concern.

We had originally hoped these people would be treated in community mental health centers.

Mr. ROGERS. Is there any reason why community mental health centers could not undertake this treatment?