

Directions Newsletter

**Deep East Texas Regional
Mental Health Mental Retardation Services**

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No. 1

Audit of MHMR services carries no surprises

Cites strengths, some weaknesses

Residential and in-home respite programs, mental retardation policies and procedures, case management services and continuity of services in the mental health division were among areas that drew positive comments during a recent audit of Deep East Texas MHMR Services.

Agency administrators were pleased with the results of the survey, which was conducted by the Texas Department of MHMR's Office of Standards and Quality Assurance in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1988.

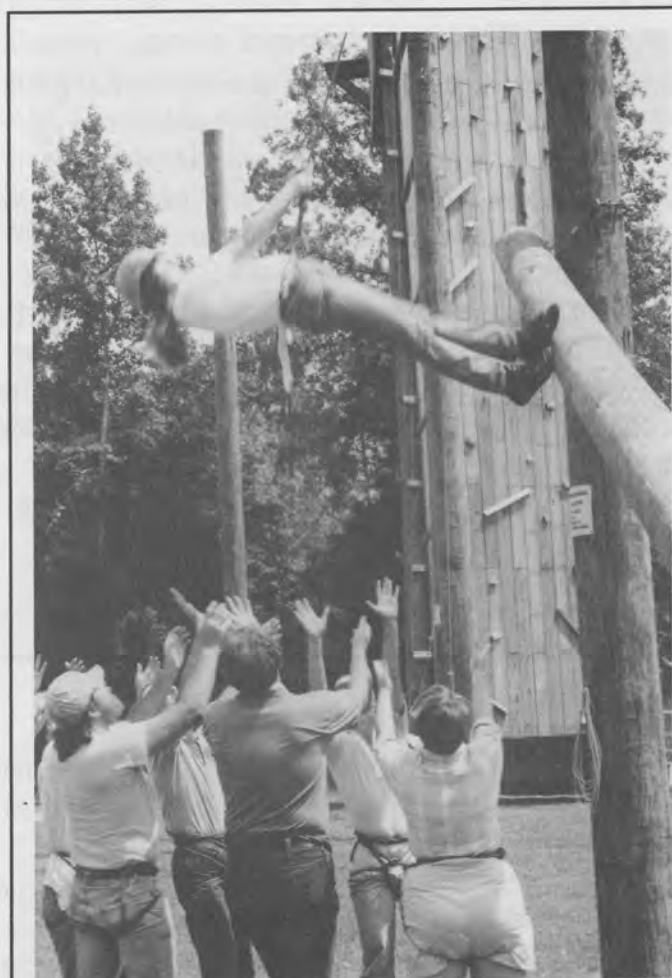
George Patterson, director of Quality Assurance and Staff Development at Deep East Texas MHMR, said the report pointed out some areas that could use improvement but that overall the results were positive.

"This audit report provided a more comprehensive format than in the past, for the first time allowing us to measure our performance in relation to the standards and compared with the performance of other community MHMR Centers," Patterson said. "We rated very well in both areas."

The audit report commended Deep East Texas MHMR for:

- "Valuable and innovative" mental retardation respite and in-home respite services;
- Comprehensive and well-written mental retardation policies and procedures (new vocational services manual described as "excellent");

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Heads Up!

Debi Smith, Peavy Switch Farm screening supervisor, plummets from an incline bar into the waiting arms of other Deep East Texas MHMR staff. The incline bar is just one element in a therapy program MHMR administrators may purchase. Program proponents say it can enhance learning, develop trust, promote group cohesion, improve self esteem and reduce stress.

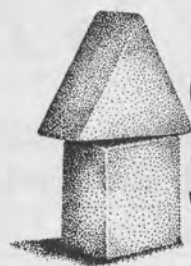
Program for infants, toddlers softens image

An MHMR program serving developmentally delayed infants and their families has a new name, Cornerstone, and a new image. The seven-year-old program previously was referred to as the Infant Intervention Program.

"The term 'infant intervention' was technically correct but it meant little to anyone outside the agency and seemed to present a negative, sterile image," MHMR's Director of Mental Retardation Services Susan Rushing said.

"Our new name and logo present a more compassionate and nurturing image. We anticipate that the change will have a positive effect in the communities we serve and give us greater visibility."

Children served in the program are, or are at risk of falling, significantly behind



CORNER stone

Helping East Texas, One Child at a Time . . .

others in their age group in developing skills such as walking, sitting up, talking and understanding speech. While delays can be caused by conditions that result in mental retardation, they can also be caused by conditions such as blindness, cerebral palsy, prolonged illnesses or debilitating accidents.

Cornerstone's parent advisors work in conjunction with speech therapists, physical therapists and special educators as they strive to help each child reach

his or her developmental goals by providing training and support for the parents and by introducing new learning activities or techniques to the child.

"Our goal is to stimulate each child's mental and physical development so that he or she functions at, or as close as possible to, an age-appropriate level," Rushing said.

"Basically, we're helping each child learn to maximize strengths and minimize disabilities."

Audit

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- Case management services and documentation of these services;
- Excellent mental health liaison that ensures continuity of care with agency's psychiatric hospital and residential substance abuse program;
- A detailed and well-organized comprehensive service plan;
- Ensuring respect of client rights;
- Effective distribution of non-

residential mental health and mental retardation services;

- Excellent record documentation by agency physicians, and physician/client contacts in excess of what is required;
- Maintaining positive working relationships with community referral sources;
- Accreditation from the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations; and
- Thorough management audits.

Some deficiencies were also noted including a need for

additional training for direct care staff, especially in the area of screening clients for mental health services; expansion of quality assurance activities; more staff in outpatient clinics to increase availability of services; and improved communications between after-hours Crisis Line staff and treatment units.

"The audit report didn't carry any major surprises," Patterson said, "and the deficiencies that were noted are currently being addressed."

San Jacinto County volunteers donate \$4,000 to van fund

Perseverance pays. Just ask members of the San Jacinto County Advisory Council.

After more than a year of time-consuming volunteer work, the group, under the leadership of Chairman Mae Campbell, raised \$4,000. The money will assist in the purchase of a van that will provide transportation for San Jacinto County residents who attend the MHMR workshop in Polk County. The balance of the van cost will be paid by MHMR.

Polk/San Jacinto MHMR Service Director Craig Ireland said the new van is on order and should hit the roads by December, and not a minute too soon.

"To date we've been trans-

porting six or seven people from San Jacinto County to the workshop in an old van that has more than 160,000 miles on it," Ireland said. "We desperately were in need of more reliable transportation.

"San Jacinto County is a very rural, very poor county. Raising \$4,000 was no easy task. They (volunteers) did a wonderful job."

Council members relied on an array of activities to earn the cash including a spaghetti dinner, a silent auction, cake sales, walk-a-thons, garage sales and raffles.

And they have already set a new goal: raising additional funds to purchase a wheelchair lift for the van.



Gaffney Phillips

Gaffney Phillips joins MHMR Board

Deep East Texas MHMR's Board of Trustees recently welcomed a new member, attorney Gaffney Phillips. Commissioners in Polk and San Jacinto counties selected Phillips, a resident of Livingston, as their MHMR Board representative upon the resignation of the Rev. Ed Dodson.

Polk County Judge Wayne Baker noted that Phillips' former service on the MHMR Board from 1984 to 1985 was a key factor in her selection as the Polk/San Jacinto County representative.

"Mrs. Phillips did an excellent job as a former representative for Polk and San Jacinto; we were pleased when she expressed an interest in resuming her position on the MHMR Board," Judge Baker said. "She is a very



San Jacinto County Advisory Council Chairman Mae Campbell (left) and member Mae Meadors prepare for a spaghetti dinner fund-raising event.

See PHILLIPS, Page 6

CAMP LEANDER

Fishing. Swimming. Races via paddle boats and tractors. Horseback riding. Volleyball and baseball games. Arts and crafts. Sundae-making marathon. Dancing, singing and buckets of laughter.

It was four days chock-full of fun, sun and pigging out for the 48 mentally retarded and mentally ill adults who boogied on down to Camp Leander (located just north of Austin) in June. For the seven



staff members who served as counselors it was a combination of fun and hard work.

Everybody was pooped by the time they loaded up and headed for home, according to Camp Directors Nancy Jones, program director for MHMR vocational services, and Bennie Russell, Sabine/San Augustine Sheltered Workshop service director.

"It's a great experience for both clients and staff," Jones said. "It brings us (staff) back to the reality of what MHMR is all about, and why we're doing what we do."

"For the clients it's a week of sheer pleasure, enjoyment and entertainment. For most, it's one of the few opportunities they have to take a real vacation."

Russell concurred.

"Seeing clients having such a good time just reinforces our sense of pride in what we at MHMR are doing."

"This is my eighth year to attend. It's an experience I recommend for all staff. You haven't lived until you've cooked 15 pounds of bacon and 12 dozen eggs for one morning's breakfast."

The trip to Camp Leander has been an annual event since 1978.



(Left) Mary Shelton and Ken Lynn, representing Polk/San Jacinto MHMR, were victors in the paddleboat races. (Below, from left) Camp counselors Jimmy Mascorro, Harold Wunderlich, Noel Price, Mickey Tibbetts, Benny Russell and Tom Marsh compete in a womanless beauty pageant on talent night.



(Far left) Ricky Berlin and Dana Ellison with Nacogdoches MHMR are crowned Camp Leander King and Queen. Counselor Benny Russell and Kenneth Faver from Sabine/San Augustine MHMR (left) take a break. (Bottom right) Counselor Sally Navarre of the Kirbyville/Newton Sheltered Workshop assists Rebecca Wilson of Shelby MHMR with her makeup as they gussie up for dinner at the Magic Time Machine in Austin.

Carol Dohanich: Employee of the Quarter

Case Management Liaison Carol Dohanich has been named MHMR Employee of the Quarter by agency administrators.

As mental health liaison Dohanich is responsible for assuring that the region's mentally ill individuals receive a continuum of appropriate services.

While MHMR stresses the advantages of community-based treatment, there are times when those we serve require more intense treatment than can be provided at local outpatient clinics. When a patient requires treatment at residential facilities such as Rusk State Hospital, MHMR's Lufkin-based psychiatric hospital or Peavy Switch Farm (a Lufkin-based alcohol and substance abuse treatment facility) Dohanich steps in to assure smooth transitions to and from these facilities.

Dohanich, a three-year em-

ployee at MHMR, holds a Bachelor's degree with an emphasis on social rehabilitation. She started work for the agency as a mental health case manager and, through two promotions, achieved her current position.

Her supervisor, Director of Case Management and Continuity of Care Kim Davis, described Dohanich as a "conscientious and assertive worker."

"Since Carol has been employed with MHMR she has demonstrated her ability to get the job done," Davis said. "Initially Carol, and all our other case managers, did liaison on a part-time basis. Carol proved so adept in this area that we made it a full-time position and pulled our other case managers out allowing them more time to work strictly within their communities.

"Carol has kept our admis-



Carol Dohanich

sions to Rusk as low as possible. She takes the initiative as a patient advocate, appropriately identifies their needs and has a good knowledge of available community resources."

Dohanich, as all Employees of the Quarter, received a plaque and a merit increase in salary.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Deep East Texas Regional MHMR Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, handicap or age in admission or access to treatment or employment in its programs and activities.

Sanford Skelton, rights protection officer, has been designated to coordinate efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulation which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap.

Phillips

(Continued from Page 3)

caring, public-service oriented person, and we look forward to her continued service on behalf of Polk and San Jacinto counties."

Phillips established a law practice in Livingston in 1981. She is a 1973 graduate of Rice University and a 1978 graduate of the University of Houston School of Law. After graduation she spent two years in private practice in Houston before

moving to Polk County.

She is past president of the Polk County Child Welfare Board and current president of the Murphy Memorial Library Board of Trustees. She is also a member of the Pilot Club of Livingston and the First Presbyterian Church of Livingston.

Upon his resignation the Rev. Dodson, a two-year member of the MHMR Board, received a Certificate of Appreciation from the agency for his "leadership" and "exceptional dedication."

Three centers move to new facilities

The Angelina County, Trinity County and Kirbyville/Newton MHMR Centers moved to new facilities during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1988. Service directors at these facilities said local volunteers were a motivating force in the changes.

Angelina County MHMR

The Angelina County MHMR Center moved into a newly built, \$600,000 facility in August. MHMR Service Director Nell Newton gives credit for acquisition of the facility to the Angelina County Association for Human Development Inc. and Angelina County officials.

In 1987 county officials applied for and were awarded a \$300,000 grant from the Texas Department of Community Affairs for construction of the new facility. Matching funds for the grant were provided by the Association for Human Development, a volunteer support organization for the Angelina MHMR Center.

"This joint venture has been quite rewarding," Association Chairman Diana Hill said. "We have built one of the most beautiful, top-notch MHMR outpatient clinics in the state."

A donation from the Grace Dunne Richardson Estate, administered by the Lufkin Area Council of Garden Clubs, financed landscaping costs.

The new facility, located at 4103 South Medford in Lufkin (next to MHMR's regional office), offers a variety of services including counseling, vocational training, psychosocial programming for the chronically mentally ill and a program for developmentally delayed children up to three years of age. The phone number remains the same: (409)639-2384.

Trinity County MHMR

In July the Trinity County MHMR Center held an open house to give area residents a peek at their new

home at 115 E. Front Street in Groveton.

Trinity County Service Director Larry Welker said members of the Groveton Volunteer Fire Department spearheaded remodeling efforts for the 2,640-square-foot building. The open house was hosted by members of the Groveton Reading Club.

"We're leasing the building from the Groveton Fire Department at about the same cost as our old office space," Welker said. "This arrangement is helping the city finance a new fire station, and it's given us (MHMR) a better, roomier facility."

Previous accommodations provided only 600 square feet of office space. The additional space will be used to house a new sheltered workshop program for mentally ill and mentally retarded adults. Other services offered at the center include outpatient treatment and case management. Phone: (409)642-1633.

Kirbyville/Newton MHMR

July was also moving time for staff at the Kirbyville/Newton MHMR Center. The center relocated to a renovated building at 910 South Margaret in Kirbyville.

Sheltered Workshop Service Director Sally Navarre said additional space was gained in the move allowing MHMR programs in that area to combine services under one roof. The Kirbyville/Newton Sheltered Workshop and the Cornerstone program for developmentally delayed infants are now located in one building.

The facility provides space for a large workshop area, covered back porch, conference room, community room, therapy room, offices and reception area.

The Kirbyville Mental Health Association (a local support group funded by community donations) purchased furniture for the new reception area and paint for the workshop floor. Navarre said staff owe special thanks

to association President Mark Sloan and Treasurer L.O. Bean.

Decorating the walls are paintings on loan from local artists Don Crane and Freda McGilberry. In addition a refrigerator and icemaker were donated by the Kirbyville Lions Club and the Jasper/Newton Electric Cooperative, respectively. Navarre said this donation completed a set of kitchen appliances that are used by sheltered workshop participants in cooking classes. The phone number for the center is (409)423-2237.

Client Rights

Any client, relative of a client or representative of a client who has a complaint, comment or suggestion regarding confidentiality of records or the health, safety, welfare or legal and human rights of a patient or client of this center is invited and urged to submit them in writing to:

Chairperson
Public Responsibility Committee
P.O. Box 935
Lufkin, Texas 75901

The Public Responsibility Committee is an independent, impartial body. None of its members are employees of this center.

Copies of Deep East Texas MHMR's operating policies and procedures may be reviewed at Central Administration, 4101 South Medford Drive, Lufkin, Texas.

Holiday show needs talent, skit ideas, etc.

Here's an opportunity for all you would-be actors, actresses, directors and vocalists to show your stuff.

Staff at the Kirbyville/Newton Group Homes are laying plans for an agency Christmas production and they can use all the volunteers they can get. The show, tentatively scheduled for the third week in December, will feature staff and community talent for the amusement and entertainment of MHMR program participants.

Service Director Carolyn McDonald needs skit ideas, other program suggestions, actors and actresses, singers, stage hands and props. To volunteer your services, to provide tips on possible recruits or for more information, contact her at (409)423-3671.

**In an emergency
call MHMR's
toll-free
CRISIS LINE:**

**1-800-
392-8343**

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Group supports regional MR programs

Parents Resource Network, a new nonprofit organization, will soon be providing support for two MHMR programs that are charged with assisting families in their efforts to maintain mentally retarded family members in their home communities.

Network members have outlined some general areas in which they hope to provide assistance for MHMR's regional Respite Care and Home and Community Services programs.

"They indicated a desire and willingness to help us get the word out about our programs, monitor the quality of our services and provide items that wouldn't typically be covered in our budget," Respite Care Service Director Dana Kerbo said.

Respite Care gives caretakers a break from the daily supervision of mentally retarded family members by providing trained staff who can assume caretaking responsibilities for a specified time. Services are offered either

in the home or at the Lufkin-based Respite Care facility.

Kerbo said regional awareness of Respite Care services is vital in order for the program to reach individuals in need of relief from the strenuous demands of caring for their mentally retarded loved ones.

Home and Community Services provide nursing, transportation, day programming, alternative living residences, case management and other services for mentally retarded persons who require special assistance in order to remain in their communities. HCS Service Director Melanie Whitworth Taylor said this program is geared specifically toward serving individuals who are at greatest risk of being placed in a state school.

Parent Resource Network's seven-member board is under the leadership of President Brenda Jones of Lufkin. Members are in the process of drawing up bylaws and developing a logo.