

Problems in child care serious says Peel report

By MARY LOUISE BIRKS
Times staff writer

A shortage of treatment facilities for emotionally disturbed children is seriously affecting the quality of children's mental health care in Peel, says an internal report presented to the Peel District Health Council.

The most serious problem is the backlog of children waiting for diagnosis or treatment in Peel, says the report, which was presented in late November by a sub-committee on behalf of the General Council on Children's Services at the request of the health council.

"To a lesser extent we found that problems such as a lack of co-ordination, poor communication and professional jealousies (among agencies) exist," says the report. "In our view, however, these are secondary to the fact that the present system is simply over-burdened with seriously disturbed children."

Only 28 beds

The sub-committee expressed concern that seriously disturbed children considered threats to themselves and others are waiting at home for placement in treatment centres.

The report also examined the changing demands facing social service agencies in the region.

It says the Children's Aid Society (CAS), traditionally a watchdog agency that intervened on behalf of children, is now "increasingly being approached by parents who wish to surrender the custody of their children — particularly teenagers — and by young people themselves who wish to leave home."

As a result, case workers in various agencies spend a great deal of time dealing with emergency and crisis situations, the report says.

In the case of seriously disturbed children waiting for diagnosis and treatment, workers expend a great deal of time and energy trying to make suitable arrangements, often keeping these children under explosive conditions at home until help is found.

Because Peel has only 28 hospital beds for emotionally disturbed children, 161 children from Peel were placed outside the region in the first five months of 1971. This figure doesn't include children placed privately or through other agencies in Peel. The report says agencies

often must go to extremes to place children. For example, in the spring the CAS placed a teenager in Whitby on the condition that the CAS provide the staff — in this instance, two child care workers seven days a week.

The report recommends a treatment centre be built and staffed immediately on a site adjacent to the proposed Credit Valley Hospital.

New centre needed

The children's mental health centre would provide hospital beds in emergency-crisis situations, offer diagnostic services at a sophisticated level, and act as a consultation service.

A steering committee has not been formed to carry through the report's recommendations or arrange funding. In an interview last week, Kip Holloway, executive director of the Peel District Health Council, called the report, "a step in the right direction."

Service unco-ordinated

A copy of the report will be sent to the board of directors of the proposed Credit Valley Hospital for their consideration.

Holloway said the report expressed general concerns of professionals in the field. But the problem, he said, is one of a lack of co-ordination and communication between mental health care services. There are 53 organizations in Peel involved in a mental health service, said Holloway. "Theoretically, a mental health service could be functioning next door to another, the two doing the same type of work and never get together to talk about it. This isn't an indictment — just a statement about the way things are."

"Continuity of mental health care is another problem," said Holloway. "What happens to a 15-year-old emotionally disturbed youth when he becomes an adult at 18 in the eyes of the law?" he said. "Children's services are a responsibility of the ministry of community and social services, adult health care falls under the jurisdiction of the ministry of health. There should be closer interaction between children's and adult mental health care programs in terms of official dialogue between the two ministries."



Sisters Mari Lynn and Sylvia closed the Chatterbox Friday

The end of an era

Continued from page 1

It was the local place on the corner where everyone came to meet. It was the kind of place where customers could pick up the coffee pot to serve themselves and then serve everyone in the room, including staff who were on their break. It was the old-fashioned lunch-counter kind of place where you could saunter up to one of the 18 stools and order a \$2 lunch.

It was the kind of place where two rookie proprietors never had to call a repair man because one of the customers would always volunteer to

fix whatever went wrong. When the sisters first took over the establishment it was the customers who told them how to run the place.

"They were the ones who told us there was too much meat in the chili and we were never going to make a buck giving it away," laughed Brown, a former real estate agent.

"We learned a lot about the business and human nature, that's for sure. I can honestly say we never met any rotten people because then we'd just laugh at them and they'd never come back. Two visits to this place

and we knew a person had been booked."

The sisters have started looking for a new place in the neighborhood — "something we can afford because we don't want to be just any other restaurant."

After all they've got a tradition of cheap homecooked meals to uphold and they're anxious to give Chatterbox patrons someplace to go, "so they won't have to walk around with that hangdog look" hankering for a home away from home.

Murder trial of 4 youths to be held in juvenile court

The trial of four juveniles charged in connection with the beating death of a Mississauga man will be held in juvenile court.

Crown Attorney Steven Sherriff asked Thursday to have the youths tried as adults. "I wanted it made public," said Sherriff.

Family Court Judge William Little made the ruling, which will prevent press coverage of the trial. A written

decision will be handed down along with a trial date Jan. 8.

Robert Cooke, 38, died about a half hour after being found unconscious behind Fieldgate Plaza June 9. Police said he had been kicked and beaten.

Four juveniles were arrested after a Peel police investigation.

Cooke, affectionately known in the area as "Bobo," was mildly retarded. He lived under the supervision of the

Mississauga Association for the Mentally Retarded apartment life skills training program.

Cooke was employed at Lumiray Manufacturing Inc. lamp company in Bramalea.

The youths, two aged 14 and two aged 15, have been charged under the Juvenile Delinquency Act. Three are residents of Mississauga; the other is from Toronto.

My kingdom for a 10-foot pack of Roloids

The ambulance screeches to a halt in front of the double doors, its ominous siren still wailing. The rear door of the ambulance swings open and two frantic attendants wheel out a stretcher.

A blanketed figure lies motionless on the stretcher, moaning in pain.

The attendants work feverishly to speed the stretcher through the doors and into the waiting elevator. The blanketed figure moans again as the elevator labors up to the third floor. The doors open and the stretcher is wheeled to the admitting desk.

One of the attendants, wiping perspiration from his forehead, speaks. "Vic Tanny's?" he asks. "We've got another emergency case."

"Looks like a serious one," says the girl at the admitting desk. "Better give him two hours on the bicycle and an hour of callisthenics."

This is just another in an epidemic of the most serious health hazard of the season — The Great Christmas Excess. All across Mississauga people gobbled turkey, crammed their stomachs with cranberries, stuffed their

faces with stuffing and exhausted their livers with egg nog.

Mississauga hospital was inundated with Excess-related illnesses and accidents over the holiday season.



Chris Zelkovich
THE CITY

In an innovative operation, a Clarkson man was surgically removed from his jeans following a four-hour marathon session at the dinner table Christmas Day. Another operation

is scheduled later this week to separate him from underwear.

In Malton, a man was rushed to hospital after he inadvertently swallowed a 14-lb. turkey Christmas evening. Doctors also discovered part of a Christmas tree in his stomach.

On New Year's Day a Streetsville man underwent emergency back surgery after he spent 11 straight hours watching bowl games. His eyeballs were also donated to the Royal Ontario Museum.

A visitor to Mississauga was treated at hospital for an overdose of Roloids on Boxing Day. He is resting comfortably but will have to undergo psychiatric care because he now weeps uncontrollably at the mention of the word "turkey".

The holiday week produced several bizarre occurrences related to The Great Excess.

The local Weight Watchers' club raided a Meadowvale home on Christmas Day and charged a woman with contributing to the delinquency of a fat person. Her husband was charged

with violation of Weight Watchers' Rule 17: Thou shalt not eat 6 lbs. of shortbread cookies at one sitting.

Peel police arrested a man and charged him with assault after he tried to stuff a turkey sandwich in his wife's left ear when she served leftovers on New Year's Day.

After a New Year's Eve celebration at an Italian restaurant, a Lakeview man offered his stomach to Petro-Can as an alternative source of energy.

A Port Credit man is being sued for divorce by his wife after he returned from a Christmas office party. He returned from the party just in time to watch the Rose Bowl game on New Year's Day.

A well-known local model was turned down for a major job shortly after Christmas and is now modelling for Pennington's.

The Ontario Motor League answered 217 calls during the holiday week. A total of 104 of them were emergency calls to tie shoelaces for people no longer capable of bending over that far.