

First Budget Cuts Don't Hurt NSH 'Basic Services'-- Yet

By TIM RICHARD

Northville State Hospital hasn't had to lay off anyone, nor has it had to cut "basic services" because of a two percent across-the-board budget cut ordered by Gov. Milliken.

But there may be trouble ahead, according to the NSH medical superintendent, Dr. Richard Budd.

The two percent cut was with a projected state deficit of \$68 million. But now they're talking about a \$130 million deficit," Dr. Budd notes.

THE GOVERNOR and

Legislature must operate within the revenues, under the constitution. They're doing the best they can for us, so we're obligated to do the best we can.

"I don't feel that beating the Legislature over the head will help the cause any. There's nothing they can do."

The budget cut was ordered by Milliken when revenue collections were below expectations due to general economic woes and the General Motors auto strike that lasted more than two months.

At that, Northville is better off than at least one other state hospital: Several dozen employees have been laid off at Pontiac.

OVERALL, the situation looks something like this: "Northville's operating budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 was \$12.5 million.

• A two percent cut amounts to \$250,000.

Actually, the cut is more severe than it appears because it was ordered Nov. 23. The cuts must be made across seven months, not 12. The cut, when spread over the shorter period, amounts to about 3.7 percent, as Dr. Budd calculates it.

How is the superintendent making the cuts?

Here are questions sent to the Community Commission on Drug Abuse, Post Office Box Drugs, Livonia 48151.

Since the recent near death of at least one Livonia high school student from the drug Secoral, we have been asked enough questions to warrant devoting an entire column to this unrelated drug.

What is this stuff and what does it really do to you?

S.K., Westland

The primary medical use of Secoral (secobarbital) and other barbiturates ("barbs," "downers," etc.) is to induce sleep. Very simply stated, the effects are comparable to those of alcohol: reflexes are slowed, there is a feeling of giddiness (or drunkenness), speech becomes slurred, balance becomes difficult to maintain.

What is the effect of an overdose of this drug?

R.J., Livonia

Ultimately it slows down or stops the breathing mechanism. This is the cause of death.

What do you think is the main danger to a kid from downers?

B.L., Westland

Look at it this way: "Downers" act a lot like alcohol, but it is difficult but not impossible to kill yourself by consuming too much alcohol at one time -- the large volume and irritating properties of alcohol generally lead to vomiting before a lethal dose is taken. Unfortunately, a lethal dose of this sort of capsules or pills could fit easily into a teaspoon. Once swallowed the drug acts swiftly to depress vital functions and (in an overdose) to kill.

How much of this drug does it take to kill someone?

K.V., Livonia

To say that a certain dose is deadly would be to imply that any lesser dose is safe, and we're not about to give that sort of information. The only safe dose is that prescribed by a physician or other medical practitioner. What are the long term

mean by "community programs."

One reason is economic. The hospital is located on Seven Mile Rd. in Northville Township, but its service area includes Detroit west of Woodward and Detroit east of Wayne County. Many persons lack autos, and public transportation service has shriveled.

Another is that a patient responds better in a community setting than in an institution, according to Dr. Budd and most mental health experts.

The Fieldbrook Unit is located on the hospital grounds, but it is considered a "community unit." Other units are served at the Northwest Clinic on Livonia in north-west Detroit; the Fisher Center in an old church rectory on 12th St. downtown, in the Cadillac Square Bldg.; and Young Adult Community Center in a store front on Grand River near the downtown.

There are plenty, but there are two that deserve special attention. Tolerance develops -- this is, the user needs larger and larger amounts to satisfy the need that develops.

Addiction can result. The user comes to need the drug in order to prevent withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal from this sort of drug can be even more difficult and dangerous than withdrawal from heroin.

Adult Art Is Offered By Madonna

Five separate sections of non-credit adult art classes will be offered at Madonna College, Livonia, in the spring semester. Registration is on Wednesday, Jan. 6, from 3 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m. in the art department.

There will be three sections in drawing and design: Monday mornings 10 - 12:45; Monday evenings 6:45 - 9:30; and Tuesday mornings 10 - 12:45.

Two sections will be offered in painting, both on Wednesdays: in the mornings, at 10 - 12:45 and in the evenings 6:45 - 9:30.

Classes will begin the week of Jan. 11.

Details can be obtained by calling the art department, 428-8000, ext. 8. The college is at 36600 Schoolcraft.

Elect Servitto

Farmington resident Edward Servitto has been elected to another term as director-at-large of the Detroit Ceramic Tile Contractors' Association.

Servitto is owner of Ed's Tile Co. in Redford Township. The association consists of 100 professional ceramic tile contractors working in Southeastern Michigan.

The best ever!

As 1970 draws to a close, I wish to extend my best wishes to all that 1971 will be the best year ever! Happy New Year.

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Beating the Legislature over the head won't help the cause.

--Dr. Budd



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