

County forms plan to take over mental health

BY TIM CARVELL
STAFF WRITER

It may not be perfect, but a tentative agreement has been reached between Oakland County and the state government for local management of county mental health programs.

Should the County Board of Commissioners and Mental Health Board approve the new agreement, Oakland County will have the right to determine how it distributes funds for mental health needs; currently, the state manages mental health programs for the county.

Under the proposed program, known as full management, the county will be able to direct funding according to its needs, accord-

ing to Dr. Richard Cooper, director of the Oakland County Community Mental Health Services Board. One area in which the county will consider increasing funding, Cooper added, is alternatives to hospitalization, such as crisis centers and group homes.

"Right now, if a patient is seriously mentally ill and needs to be taken out of his own home, the only place he can be taken is to Clinton Valley," Cooper said. "We have patients at Clinton Valley currently who shouldn't be there, but there's no other place for them to go."

While critics of full management have charged that such a plan would allow the state to cut funding, Cooper said the current

proposal has two clauses to prevent cutbacks.

"We built into our contract a drop-dead clause," he said. "If funding drops below 95 percent of the previous year's full funding, the contract terminates automatically and direction reverts back to the state."

To keep the state from circumventing the drop-dead clause by cutting the mental health budget to 96 percent every year, the contract also names a dollar figure below which the budget cannot drop.

Still, county commissioner Marilyn Gosling, R-Bloomfield Hills, said the proposed contract didn't quite grant everything she'd hoped for.

"I always like to get a little more than I expect," she said. "I would like the state to reach equality in funding of mental health."

Nonetheless, Gosling concluded that "it's a fair contract."

Should the contract receive approval, Oakland County will become the second-to-last county in

the state to implement full management; currently, only Oakland and Macomb counties lack such agreements.

The county's move toward full management was slowed by its 1983 lawsuit charging the state with inadequate funding. Until the lawsuit was decided last

spring, the county could not overhaul its funding procedures. Now, Cooper said, the state is eager to hand over control of its mental health programs to the county.

"I don't think the state wants to continue operating these programs," he said.

MORC opposes county control

BY TIM CARVELL
STAFF WRITER

While state and county mental health officials prepare for the approval of a proposed full management program for Oakland County, one organization is mounting a campaign to keep control of county mental health agencies in the state's hands.

The Macomb-Oakland Regional Center (MORC) has good reason to fear full management; currently, it is under state control, because both Macomb and Oakland counties' mental health programs are state-run. But if the County Commission and Mental Health Board approve the full management proposal, Oakland County will direct its own programs — and MORC's funding will be placed in jeopardy.

To prevent such a transfer, Barbara Bergum, president of the Association for Macomb-Oakland Regional Center, has charged the

Michigan Department of Mental Health with sloppy governance.

"We demand an immediate moratorium on all closures of state mental health agencies and all transfers of state community placement programs to county Community Mental Health (CMH) Boards until there is a review and evaluation made by the department as required by the Mental Health Code," Bergum wrote in a press release.

Bergum, who could not be reached for direct comment, proceeded to charge the Department of Mental Health with recklessly closing state facilities, and the CMH boards with failing to represent their constituents.

"Community Mental Health Boards are comprised of county commissioners and political appointees with little or no experience in mental health who serve as a rubber stamp for the boards' executive directors," Bergum

wrote.

Those who support the full management agreement called Bergum's fears unfounded. County commissioner Marilyn Gosling, R-Bloomfield Hills, said MORC would not be disbanded under full management, but it would have to compete with other agencies for the county's business.

"The staff feels that MORC is going to be destroyed," Gosling said. "The state would like to privatize MORC. In the foreseeable future, we will be contracting with MORC to provide client homes. If MORC were outbid, then they might lose." Such an agreement may frighten MORC, according to Dr. Richard Cooper, director of the Oakland County Community Mental Health Services Board.

"What they're trying to do is preserve their own jobs," Cooper said. "They want to preserve their high pay and good benefits."

nigosian's ORIENTAL RUG CLEARANCE

Our Entire Multi-Million Dollar Collection is

40-70% Off

Nigosian's Oriental Rug Co. is clearing out its entire stock of quality hand woven imports to make space for upcoming shipments. Every size, every color, every rug in stock has been reduced 40 - 70% to clear them out fast. There will not be a better time to buy this year, so hurry to the Nigosian location nearest you.

nigosian's

ORIENTAL RUG CO.

Established 1970

DEARBORN	Both Locations	BIRMINGHAM
21919 Michigan Avenue West Dearborn, MI 48124 Phone (313) 277-1330	M, Th 10 - 8 T, W, F, 8 10 - 6 Sunday 12 - 5	808 South Woodward Birmingham, MI 48009 Phone (313) 644-7750

GET READY FOR SPRING

Sale



SAVE WITH SHERWOOD'S GREAT PRICES...SUCH AS:

20% OFF BEDROOMS, DINING ROOMS, OCCASIONAL TABLES, PICTURES AND LAMPS	25% OFF FELD FURNITURE IN STOCK	30% OFF ART GLASS IN STOCK	50% OFF NATUZZI LEATHER IN STOCK
---	---------------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------------

BRING IN THIS COUPON AND SAVE AN ADDITIONAL

10%

OFF ANY SINGLE ITEM*

1644 ORCHARD LAKE ROAD
WEST BLOOMFIELD, MI 48122
11111 HAWTHORNE
HOURS: MON-FRI 10A-6P
SAT 10A-5P SUN 12A-5P

Kitchen & Bathroom Remodeling Specialists



Custom Design & Installation of Wood & Formica Cabinets

FREE KITCHEN DESIGN CLASS Jan. 21st, Space Limited Call for Information

Materials for the Do-It-Yourselfer HOMECREST **CORIAN**

FREE IN-HOME ESTIMATES


Let Our Professionals Show You Our Unique Solutions

KOHLER **GIBALTAR**

Kitchen TOP SHOP INC.
11111 HAWTHORNE
477-1515

When my routine pregnancy suddenly wasn't...

I was glad I'd chosen Hutzel. From the beginning, my pregnancy was described as "normal." So when I wanted a private room—one where labor, delivery, and recovery could all take place—my doctor had no objections. But if something went wrong,



I wanted to know my baby and I would also have the most knowledgeable specialists and the latest medical technology nearby. So I chose The Detroit Medical Center's Hutzel Hospital.

To my surprise, Hutzel's private LDRP (Labor, Delivery, Recovery, Post-Partum) rooms were among the most spacious and beautiful I'd seen. I was glad I could be in one—and that I'd chosen Hutzel. Because at the last minute, my baby developed complications and a team of Hutzel specialists was right there to provide the care we both needed.

Like a lot of other women, I've learned there's no such thing as a "routine" pregnancy. Thank goodness there's Hutzel Hospital.

Wayne State University
DMC Hutzel Hospital

For more information, or a physician referral, call 745-5000.

Detroit Medical Center • Children's Hospital of Michigan • Detroit Receiving Hospital and University Health Center • Grace Hospital • Harper Hospital • Huron Valley Hospital • Hutzel Hospital • Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan • DMC Health Care Centers • DMC Occupational Health Services © 1992 Detroit Medical Center