

Report on the visit of Justice Sujata V. Manohar, Member NHRC to the Institute of Mental Health and Hospital, Agra on 5 May 2003.

Justice Smt. Sujata V. Manohar, Member, NHRC visited the Institute of Mental Health and Hospital (IMHH), Agra on 5 May, 2003. She was accompanied by Shri Chaman Lal, Special Rapporteur NHRC. The Institute was last visited by the Special Rapporteur on 18 February, 2002. The Member reviewed the progress of implementation of the directions issued by the Commission from time to time under the Supreme Court mandate dated 11.11.97 requiring it to oversee the functioning of this Institution. In the absence of the Director of the Institute – on leave, Dr. R. Singh, Medical Supdt. and Dr. Ajay K. Srivastava, Psychiatric Social Scientist briefed the Member about the progress achieved by the Institution under various heads of management and administration including the development of Training facilities and establishment of Half-way Homes. The Member showed keen interest in the problems of the Long Stay patients.

The discussion was followed by a round of the campus which included visit to OPD, ECT room, Male and Female wards of both paying and non-paying categories, Family Ward and the Half Way Home. The observations and suggestions made by the Member are recorded below:

Admission and Discharge

The OPD attendance has registered an increase of 14.4% from 16348 in 2001-02 to 18707 in 2002-03. The daily OPD average has increased from 52.91 to 60.54.

A total of 22598 patients – 2035 male and 563 female were admitted as indoor patients in 2002-03. The corresponding number for 2001-02 was 2909. Average bed occupancy has fallen from 570.01 to 544.6.

2568 patients were discharged in 2002-03 as against 2816 in the previous year. Admissions and discharges are now found to be flowing smoothly in accordance with the provisions of the Mental Health Act. The proportion of involuntary admissions has fallen from 1.4% in 2001-02 to 0.42% in 2002-03. 91 patients – 26 male and 65 female are long-stay patients. 90% of them are cases of Schizophrenia. It is commendable that the number of long stay patients has been brought down from 181 in 2001-02 to 115 as of 31st March 2003. However, the Institution is still holding a large number of long stay patients mostly women who are either destitute or have been abandoned by their families.

The drive for persuading one of the family members to stay with the patient is producing good results. The average length of the stay (ALS) has come down to 11.9 days for the patients who have a family member staying in the hospital.

Diagnostic and Therapeutic Facilities

The last review made by the Special Rapporteur, had mentioned the introduction of 8 additional tests and also the possibility of starting 15 more tests such as Phosphors test, Magnesium test, Iron test, LIP, PLIP T.3 etc. within the existing facilities. Only ___ of these tests have actually been introduced in 2002-03. However, psychological services in diagnosis and therapy have registered a progressive improvement.

With the upgradation of diagnostic facilities, the Bio-chemical Lab. has handled 21371 as against 20467 investigations last year. Psycho-diagnosis has registered an increase from 302 in 2001-02 to 324 in 2002-03 at the OPD and 173 to 246 for the indoor patients. Psycho-therapy has registered an increase from 93 to 105 at OPD and 206 to 321 for indoor patients. Group therapy was administered in 411 cases as against 394 in 2001-02.

Death of Patients

9 patients died in 2000-01, 4 in 2001-02 and 6 in 2002-03.

The Special Rapporteur had, in his report of the visit on 28 Feb. 2002, mentioned the suicide of one patient Kanchi Singh emphasising the need for a thorough inquiry. Dr. Sudhir Kumar, Director has informed the Special Rapporteur that the inquiry has held Dr. S.P. Gupta, Medical Officer, Om Prakash, officiating Head Attendant, Girjesh Kumar Incharge Ward Attendant and Kapoor Chand, Attendant guilty of professional lapses in exercising proper control & supervision. Issuing of a severe warning to the

Medical Officer, removal of officiating Head Attendant from his present post, demotion of Incharge Ward Attendant and dismissal of the Attendant have been proposed as punishment. The Director will please send to the Commission the copies of the final orders passed in this connection.

Escape of Patients

The incidence of escape had fallen from 133 in 2000-01 to 106 in 2001-02. Although it has further fallen to 69 in 2002-03, it remains a matter of concern and calls for corrective measures. It is, however, worth noting that most of the escapes have taken place from Open wards and Family wards where restrictions on patients have been deliberately relaxed.

Occupational Therapy

The number of patients working in O.T. unit has increased only marginally from 25 in 2001-02 to 32 in 2002-03. 28 patients are shown engaged in agricultural activities.

Progress is very slow. Patients are working in small numbers in tailoring, carpentry and weaving sections and for campus maintenance including 16 patient engaged in kitchen work, a total of 81 patients (16%) are engaged in these activities. This cannot be considered a satisfactory mode of occupational therapy. All the sanctioned posts of Occupational Therapist (2) and Vocational Training Instructor (5) have been lying vacant ever since they were created under the directions of the Supreme Court. The Management Committee seems little concerned about this glaring deficiency of the Institution which is otherwise progress making good.

Staff

The staff position remains unsatisfactory as was reported in the last review made by the Special Rapporteur in February 2002. Although the Institution is holding 3 senior Psychiatrists including 2 against the old sanction 2 posts out of 3 sanctioned under the directions of the Supreme Court are lying vacant. All the three posts of Jr. Psychiatrist sanctioned under the directions of the Supreme Court are also lying vacant. Vacancies of 2 Senior Clinical Psychologists and 2 Jr. Clinical Psychologists are also considered crucial vacancies. The Institute has only one Psychiatric Social Worker and 4 general purpose social workers who have, however, been put through an orientation course at NIMHANS. Recruitment proceedings in respect of one Occupational Therapist and 4 Vocational Instructor, one Lab. Technician, one Staff Nurse and one Driver have been pending for approval with the Divisional Commissioner since April 2002.

Dr. Sudhir Kumar, Director, IMIHH has been serving on deputation from K.G. Medical College since 28.2.1998 when he was the only candidate selected for the post sanctioned under the directions of the Supreme Court. He was given to understand that he would soon be appointed as regular Director. This is supported by the fact that the terms of deputation and even the period of deputation were not mentioned in the Appointment letter. Dr. Sudhir Kumar has worked with great zeal and enthusiasm and the Institute has made significant progress under his leadership. He has been requesting the Government for his permanent absorption against the post of Director. The Commission may like to recommend to the Government of UP that

early action on absorption of Dr. Sudhir Kumar as Director IMHH may be taken.

A proposal for declaring the posts of Psychiatrist, Clinical Psychologist as Clinical-cum-Academic posts has also been pending with the Government since long. The declaration is considered necessary to enable the Institution to take up Training activities.

Funding

The Institute is receiving Government grant @ Rs. 250 per patient per day for the actual strength. The Management Committee was advised by the Special Rapporteur to work out the revision of the levy in accordance with the para 9(2) of the Supreme Court order dated 8.9.1994 and request the Government to enhance the grant-in-aid accordingly. No such exercise seems to have been undertaken by the Management Committee.

Management Committee

The directions of the Supreme Court on mandatory quarterly meeting of the Management Committee are not being followed. This was observed by the Special Rapporteur in his last visit on 28 February 2002 also. The Management Committee has met only once on 18 June 2002 since then. The member remarked that a lack of interest on the part of the Divisional Commissioner who is the Chairman of the Management Committee seems to be the major cause of pendency of several matters and slow progress of the Institute in certain areas..

Civil Works

Good progress has been shown by completing 39 works including the construction of Main Gate, Extension building for Medical Store, post ECT Ward, Dining Halls in two Male Wards etc. Installation of a submersible pump with provision of pipeline for agricultural work are also worth mentioning. Seven renovations including renovation of Medical Store, Main gate of Female Ward and two Male wards etc. were also completed in 2002-03. Four new works and four renovations are in progress. 10 additional works are proposed to be taken up in 2003-04. The executing agency – UP Jal Nigam is providing satisfactory service to the Institution.

Progress regarding Professional Courses

The Institute has applied to Dr. B.R.A. University Agra for affiliation in respect of the following Courses:

1. MD (Psychiatry)
2. M.Phil and Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.
3. M.Phil and Ph.D. in Psychiatric Social Work.
4. Diploma in Psychiatric Nursing.
5. P.G. Diploma in Clinical Psychology.

The University has been requested for according IMHH the recognition as a Research Centre.

For the recognition of M.D. (Psychiatry) an application along with "No Objection" from the Government of UP and Dr. B.R.A. University Agra and an amount of Rs. 2 lakh has been submitted to the Medical Council of India through Ministry of Health, Government of India. The Executive Council of Dr. BRA University Agra cleared the above proposal with instructions to make provision in the Statute of the University. The University also constituted a Committee of Experts to approve the Ordinances and syllabus of the above courses. The Committee met on 29.1.2003 and approved the ordinances and syllabus with suggestion to create a new Faculty "Mental Health Faculty" to run these Courses. However, the approval from the Government of UP for re-designation of the available and qualified Specialist as teaching posts is still awaited.

Computerisation

The Commission had in its earlier report praised the IMHH. for its commendable initiative in computerising the data base of indoor patients. There has been no progress since then. The Management Committee was advised to allow procurement of Hardware for expanding the area of computerisation as proposed by Dr. Sunil Srivastava. Computer Networking has been identified as one of the objectives for the current year.

Research Activities

Progress has been significant. In the year 2002-03, 6 papers were published, 5 submitted, 11 were presented and 3 are under preparation. Five

- Research projects leading to Ph.D. have been registered and one submitted for registration. One Thesis leading to D.Litt. has also been submitted.

Training in Mental Health

42 Social Workers have attended Orientation training at NIMHANS of 4-6 weeks duration.

Half-way Home

The Half-way Home (Male) started in the Family Ward and is being run by the Institution itself. In the year 2001-02, 32 patients were registered and 26 of them were restored to their families. In 2002-03, 21 patients were registered and 13 were restored to their families. Efforts are on to find a suitable NGO to run the Half-way Home.

Starting a Half-way Home for female patients has been set as one of the targets for 2003-04.

Community Mental Health Services

A team of Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists and Social Workers from the Institute visits the Community Health Centre at Vrindavan every fortnight and Bah every week. The Institution was earlier providing extension services at Farah (Mathura) and Sadapad (Hathras) also. The number of visits have increased from 49 in 2000-01 to 63 in 2001-02 to 72 in 2002-03. The effort seems to be half-hearted and needs to be pursued

with more seriousness. Information about the number of patients examined has not been furnished.

Rehabilitation of Long Stay Patients

The Committee headed by Justice Sujata V. Manohar, Member is engaged in this task. Shri Harsh Mander, Country Executive Action Aid is one of the Members of the Committee. The Institute has formulated a project for Rehabilitation of Long Staying women patients jointly with the Action Aid. The matter will be discussed in the next meeting of the Committee.

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(Chaman Lal) ३१/१०/०३
Special Rapporteur