

## LETTERS

3rd November, 1969

The Honourable the Premier,  
Mr. Steele Hall, M.P.,  
Administrative Centre,  
Victoria Square,  
ADELAIDE. 5000.

Dear Sir,

Statement in support of request regarding the establishment  
of a Standing Inter-departmental Committee for the care of  
The Mentally Retarded.

The present Co-ordinating Committee for Mental Retardation had its origin in a suggestion made by Professor W. A. Cramond at the Minda Lecture for 1963. The late Mr. David Waterhouse, then President of Minda Home Inc., convened a meeting of organisations working in the field of Mental Retardation and it was subsequently suggested that an approach be made to the South Australian Association for Mental Health to organise and sponsor continuing meetings of those representatives. The Mental Health Association readily complied with this request, and as has been its usual practice in fostering community services of this kind, a Co-ordinating Committee for Mental Retardation was brought into existence as a sub-committee of the Association. The Association, while encouraging the Committee to function as a specialist body with maximally possible autonomy, nevertheless arranged for the Committee to be responsible to the Executive Committee and the Council of the Association, and to draw from the Association general guidance and support and assistance in the provision of financial and secretarial services.

The Co-ordinating Committee, from its inception, clearly met a need for the meeting together of representatives from all those organisations, both Government and non-Governmental, providing services for the Mentally Retarded in South Australia. Each of the organisations concerned found it very important in planning their own contribution to be fully aware of the existing facilities provided by other organisations, and the general lines of intended future development of those facilities. The Co-ordinating Committee provided a most useful forum for the exchange and discussion of such information.

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Moreover, where the interests of all organisations were similarly involved, the Co-ordinating Committee undertook the formulation and execution of appropriate steps to meet the common need. Such enterprises as the preparation, publication and circularisation of a Directory of Facilities in S.A. for the Mentally Retarded is but one example of the Committee's activities in this direction. Their consultation with appropriate bodies for the provision of a course of instruction for Residential Care Staff, provides a further example meeting a need expressed by Government Departments, and by the non-Government organisations providing residential facilities for the Mentally Retarded.

In these, and many other ways, the Co-ordinating Committee has markedly improved the integration and efficiency of the overall facilities for the Mentally Retarded, but there are grave limitations to the area of effectiveness of a body of this kind, and the Committee has therefore given careful consideration to re-organisation of its structure in order to deal more effectively with the considerably expanded area of activity, and the increasing involvement of both State and Commonwealth funds in the extension of facilities.

At present the Co-ordinating Committee comprises representatives of all organisations in S.A. concerned, in part or whole, with the provision of services to the Mentally Retarded. It has always been open to any newly created organisation in this field to appoint a representative to the Committee, and the invitation to do so has, in the past, been readily accepted. This universality of representation is considered to be of the greatest importance in the co-operative integration of facilities.

It is also to be noted that both the independent community organisations, no less than the three main Government Departments concerned (Mental Health, Education, Social Welfare) cannot, by the nature of their own constitutions, relinquish to the Co-ordinating Committee, any responsibilities or powers inherent in their separate organisations. In this regard the Committee is, therefore, 'consultative' but cannot be 'executive'. Nevertheless, at the present time the majority, if not all the organisations concerned, rely directly or indirectly on Government assistance by way of funds or services, and there is an increasing need to co-ordinate executive action in regard to the most effective distribution of these Government resources.

In these circumstances, the Co-ordinating Committee has made the following proposals, which have been endorsed by the Mental Health Association.

It is proposed that to meet the need of integrated executive action in this field, the Government establish a 'Standing Inter-Departmental Committee for the Mentally Retarded', this Committee to comprise the permanent heads (or their nominees) of the Departments of Mental Health, Education, Social Welfare and Treasury, and to have the following functions :-

- (1) To advise Government on the development of services for the Mentally Retarded
- (2) To receive advice from a Consultative Council on the development of services and to channel these to the appropriate Ministers in Government.

- (3) To co-ordinate and integrate the Departmental services for the Mentally Retarded.
- (4) To recommend to Government or the appropriate Minister, on the payment of grants or subsidies to organisations providing services in this field.

It is further proposed that to meet the continuing need for a universal forum for the exchange of information and discussion of problems and proposals, the present Co-ordinating Committee of the Mental Health Association ceases to be a sub-committee of that Association, and is reformed as an autonomous body to be named 'The Consultative Council for Mental Retardation in South Australia', and to be composed (as is the present Co-ordinating Committee) of representatives from all organisations, both Government and non-Government, providing services in this field.

It is further proposed that the Consultative Council is recognised by the Government as having the following functions :-

- (1) Advise on the development of services for the Mentally Retarded.
- (2) Co-ordination of the activities of all organisations involved in the provision of services for the Mentally Retarded, with a view to ensuring a balanced development and the maximum of efficiency
- (3) Development of community education programmes.

The Mental Health Association strongly supports these proposals as being necessary to ensure the continued growth of services in S.A. for the Mentally Retarded, and recommends the establishment of both the Standing Inter-Departmental Committee and the Consultative Council as the minimally required organisational structure to provide for effective co-ordination and integration. A similar organisational arrangement has been in operation in New South Wales for the past five years, and on examination appears to be functioning with very good results. In South Australia our development of services for the Mentally Retarded has been notably progressive. The Association is of the opinion that the proposed re-organisation is vital to the continued development of these services within the limits of available resources.

It is appreciated that the proposals involve the recognition by the Mental Health Association of the growth to full maturity of one of its lustiest infants and the necessary relinquishing of any further direct responsibility for the activities of co-ordination of services for the Mentally Retarded in this State. The Association would see its own role in this field to be limited in the future to participation as one of the organisations sending representatives to the Consultative Council.

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To summarise the present proposals, they are :-

- (1) That a Standing Inter-Departmental Committee be established, comprising the Permanent Heads of Government Departments concerned, to consider recommendations from the Consultative Council, to co-ordinate Government Departmental Services, and to advise Government concerning the deployment of present resources and the development of services generally for the Mentally Retarded.
- (2) That a Consultative Council be formed and recognised by Government as a widely representative community based advisory body for the development of services for the Mentally Retarded.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would give consideration to meeting a delegation from the Co-ordinating Committee for Mental Retardation in the near future at a time suitable to you.

Yours faithfully,



President.

S. A. Association for Mental Health Inc.

S.A.A.M.H. Notepaper

Dr. Richard Oaten,  
President,  
Australian Medical Association  
(S.A. Branch)  
80, Brougham Place,  
NORTH ADELAIDE

1st April, 1963

Dear Dr. Oaten,

Recently, at Theatre 62, the South Australian Association for Mental Health presented a psychodrama. The National T.V. Station, ABS-2, has approached the Association to present this psychodrama on T.V. probably on May 13th. Professor W.A. Cramond is a member of the four person panel. I am Chairman. I hereby request the permission of the Council of the Australian Medical Association to appear on T.V. in this programme. The A.M.C. may consider a request that I be anonymous, just "a psychiatrist". They would prefer to use my name, but I should insist it be used only as "Executive Chairman, South Australian Association for Mental Health".

In June, the South Australian Association for Mental Health will launch a public appeal for funds to run the Citizens Advice Bureau. This appeal will necessitate considerable publicity. I therefore request further (a) that Dr. J.D. Litt, a member of the Executive Committee of the South Australian Association for Mental Health be permitted to give an address on the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon session at the Central Methodist Mission, broadcast over Station 5KA, on June 9th; (b) that either Dr. Litt or myself be permitted, if this can be arranged, to appear on T.V. with Mrs. Marion Disney, Director of the Citizens Advice Bureau, in support of the Appeal. Again, it is understood Dr. Litt or myself would appear and be represented only as members of the Executive Committee of the South Australian Association for Mental Health.

Yours sincerely,

DR. W.A. DIBDEN

Executive Chairman  
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH INC.

S..A.A.M.H. Notepaper.

20th May, 1963

Mr. Ian Marshall,  
Talks Department,  
Australian Broadcasting Commission,  
Hindmarsh Square,  
ADELAIDE

Dear Mr. Marshall,

Herewith the suggested script for the three minute fill-in between the psychodrama and discussion. You may alter the wording if you wish.

If read fairly quickly it takes 3 minutes. However, the last paragraph can be omitted if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

DR. W.A. DIBDEN

PSYCHODRAMA - "TRIAL OR TRUST"

The psychodrama is of value in several ways. Basically, it is a means of portraying visually a situation which has possible emotional significance for the observers and even for the actors taking part. Thus the psychodrama has been used in the treatment of people with nervous and mental disorders. Usually, for this purpose, a situation is played out by a group of patients with or without members of the hospital staff. The play is presented spontaneously and without rehearsal, in view of other patients. The tensions and emotional significance of the situation portrayed are then discussed at length among the patients and psychiatric staff.

The psychodrama has also been used for community education in mental health. This may be done in two ways. A script is written and the play acted spontaneously and without rehearsal before members of an audience by actors chosen from that audience. Or a more formal presentation may be given by trained actors. You have just witnessed such a performance.

This psychodrama has already been presented twice by the South Australian Association for Mental Health before audiences in Theatre 62.

It has a difference in that the same scene, with almost identical words, is performed twice, the actors showing how it is the emotions expressed rather than the words used that influence how a situation will develop and the outcome be determined.

Whether a psychodrama is used as part of the treatment of patients or for community education, the discussion that follows is all important. The drama is designed to stimulate thinking and to awaken understanding. People try to find easy answers to their emotional and behavioural problems. Parents seek an easily digested formula for bringing up their children.



Life situations are complex and human beings are unique in how greatly one varies from another. The answers to these problems are found in understanding, in keeping a flexible and open mind, rather than in a pat and easy set of rules.

We are now to see and hear the discussion of the psychodrama you have just witnessed, by a panel and members of the audience. This is the first time such a drama has been televised in South Australia. The Executive Committee of the South Australian Association for Mental Health would welcome the comments and criticisms of viewers on this method of mental health education.

The Association would like to know whether you who watch this programme would welcome the portrayal of other human situations in drama form, and the opportunity to listen to and take part in the discussion that follows. Any suggestions of possible subjects and situations will be welcomed.

And now, over to our panel.

TELEPHONE: 8 0272

(10 LINES)

TELEPHONE NEWS: 8 0272, 8 2332

CABLE AND TELEGRAPH ADDRESS:

"BROADCAST," ADELAIDE

NEWS TELEGRAPH ADDRESS:

"BROADNEWS," ADELAIDE

AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION  
BROADCAST HOUSE, HINDMARSH SQUARE, ADELAIDE, S.A.

G.P.O. Box:  
1419 H, ADELAIDE

(NEWS) 652 F  
ADELAIDE

LH:IM:BL

18th September, 1963

Dr. W.A. Dibden,  
C/- S.A. Association for Mental Health, Inc.,  
51 Grenfell Street,  
ADELAIDE, S.A.

Dear Doctor Dibden,

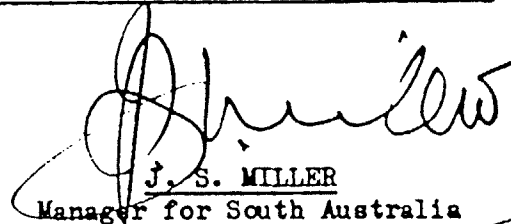
You will remember that at the time of planning the very well received "Trial or Trust" programme, the possibility was mooted of televising more psycho dramas and discussions on different themes.

The Talks Department has been allotted four tentative dates for recording these programmes in the studio. These are January 6th, 13th, 20th and February 3rd, 1964, and we would be pleased to hear your comments, and those of the Mental Health Association. We realise, of course, that having four in such a short time might present difficulties.

Presumably you would envisage a similar format, with a psycho drama, followed by comment from a panel, and finally audience discussion. The use of the studio should make for much easier and smoother presentation.

Mr. Marshall of the Talks Department will again be making the arrangements, and will look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully,  
AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION,

  
J. S. MILLER  
Manager for South Australia

Mr. J.S. Miller,  
Manager,  
Australian Broadcasting Commission,  
Hindmarsh Square,  
ADELAIDE

30th September, 1963

Dear Mr. Miller,

Thank you for your letter of the 18th September. I have been in touch with Mr. Ian Marshall of your Talks Department.

It may be difficult to prepare four psychodramas at such relatively short notice. However, as Mr. Marshall has told me we could have assistance in the actual writing of the scripts, it may be possible. I shall discuss the whole matter with other members of the South Australian Association for Mental Health and contact Mr. Marshall again.

When speaking to him, I mentioned that the South Australian Association for Mental Health in cooperation with the State Mental Health Services, will organize and conduct a Mental Health Week in August 1964. The week will be planned around the theme of early treatment for the mentally ill. I suggested to him that the A.B.C. may be interested in doing a documentary television feature to be presented during this week. I should like to take this opportunity of commending the idea to you. If you need any further information on our plans for Mental Health Week and the above suggestion for a documentary film, I shall be only too pleased to provide it.

Yours faithfully,

DR. W.A. DIBDEN

Executive Chairman

me:

Dr. W.A. Dibden,  
231, North Terrace,  
ADELAIDE

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION  
FOR MENTAL HEALTH INC.

*in association with*

THE COMPANY OF SEVEN, MILLICENT,

*presents*

## "THE TIME OF HER LIFE"

A PSYCHODRAMA                      script by EUGENE LUMBERS

at Naracoorte, Town Hall,  
Tuesday 29th September, 1970.

Millicent, The Civic and Arts Centre,  
Wednesday, 30th September, 1970.

Mount Gambier, The Technical College Theatre,  
Thursday, 1st October, 1970.

at 8.00 p.m.

PRODUCER . . . JOHN VARCOE

THE PLAYERS:

Kathy Greenwood  
Geoff Greenwood  
Susan  
Helen  
Mrs. Watt

IDA CLIFFORD  
JOHN VARCOE  
PAT JANZ  
LESLEY OGDEN  
ALMA MACDONALD

The preparation of a Psychodrama is extensive—  
In the early stages, a small group of experts draw upon  
their knowledge of problems in the field of human  
relationships and discuss the theme, situations and basic  
dialogue. Their deliberations are recorded on tape.

After several meetings, during which many facets of the  
chosen subject are examined and recorded, a writer is  
called in to listen to the tape, and to discuss the dialogue  
and situations with the experts in the field. All this calls  
for a high degree of involvement that does not exist in  
presenting an "ordinary play".

Finally, when the dialogue is written, the group meets  
again to discuss all aspects of the play and whether it  
"rings true".

Previous presentations by the South Australian Associ-  
ation for Mental Health Inc. have always drawn large  
audiences and often there has been standing room only.

This psychodrama presents the development of a tense  
situation in an apparently normal family.

The central figure is Kathy Greenwood, who, at 47, is at  
the menopause, popularly referred to as "going through  
the change of life". The others in the play are her mother,  
Mrs. Watt, her husband, Geoff, her teenage daughter,  
Helen and her married daughter, Susan. Two married sons  
are referred to in the script but do not appear on stage.

The theme deals with the effect that Kathy Greenwood  
has on her family at this "time of her life" and its effect  
upon her. The situation presented has undoubtedly  
occurred in other families and is commonly attributed to  
the woman and this time in her life.

How much is this really so and how much do the wider  
aspects of sex, marriage, children etc. play a part?

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH INCORPORATED  
APPEAL FOR FUNDS TO ESTABLISH A CHAIR AND DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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