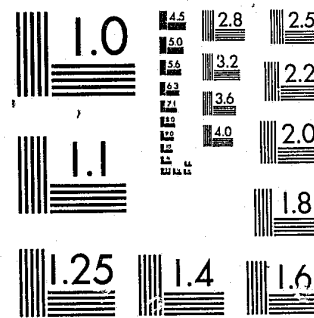


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## This Issue in Brief

### ACQUISITIONS

**Guideposts for Community Work in Police-Social Work Diversion.**—Significant steps in community work involved in the development of police-social work diversion programs are described and analyzed by Professor Harvey Tregler of the University of Illinois. Techniques and methods of work are suggested for practitioners interested in the planning, implementation, and operation of community-based programs. The effects of change on a system(s) are discussed emphasizing sensitivity to interpersonal, inter-professional, and interagency relationships, as well as client needs and issues of power and control.

**Issues in VIP Management: A National Synthesis.**—This article by Dr. Chris W. Eskridge of the University of Nebraska deals with a number of critical issues involving the management and organization of Volunteer-in-Probation (VIP) programs. While it is difficult to specifically identify why some projects fail and others succeed, it appears that management variables may well be the most powerful factors. This research effort was undertaken to provide an assessment of where we are now in regards to VIP program organization and management, and to identify areas of concern which suggest the need for future research.

**An Analysis of Contemporary Indian Justice and Correctional Treatment.**—Dr. Laurence French of the University of Nebraska states there is little doubt that the U.S. criminal justice system has a narrow, ethno-centric biased perspective that tends to view American Indians as "outsiders" to the dominant normative structure. He then proceeds to describe significant changes which have been effected with regard to treatment of the Indian offender—changes brought about

principally by efforts of the Native American Rights Fund.

**New Amsterdam's Jail Regulations of 1657.**—After the Dutch West India Company established a trading post at the tip of Manhattan in 1626, reports Professor Thorsten Sellin, the community of New Amsterdam grew as its population increased and within three decades the Company was compelled to grant the settlers substantial rights of self-government. Among the institutions developed was a jail and, in 1657, fairly detailed regulations were adopted for its management. It comes as no surprise that the regulations were practically copies from those of the old jail in Amsterdam.

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## Guideposts for Community Work in Police-Social Work Diversion

BY HARVEY TREGER

Jane Addams College of Social Work and Department of Criminal Justice,  
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WHEN the Jane Addams College of Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, placed social workers and graduate students in community police departments it was as if a pebble were thrown into the water. A widening ripple effect was created. The consequences of this innovation provided new relationships and opportunities for public service; new knowledge was developed and a workable model for systems change was discovered.

"The Police-Social Work Team" Model is an example of fitting university resources and innovation with community needs and problems in a mutually acceptable arrangement for public service. For the profession of social work "The Police-Social Work Team" extended the tradition of cooperation and facilitation to new professions and disciplines and offered services to previously unserved populations.

The experience in innovating and directing this pioneer effort in police-social work beginning in March 1970 through 1977 provided the basis for developing some generalizations and guideposts in community work which may be useful to others contemplating similar efforts in community-based corrections.<sup>1</sup>

The process of entry into a community, developing working relationships and becoming a partner in social welfare program development is something of a mystery to many professionals in the field of human services. The literature is lacking in such reports so that a description of the process can begin to fill a knowledge gap in this area. Beyond this it may provide some practice skills capable of routinization, evaluation, and further elaboration.

Structures such as the police, the criminal justice system, and the political arrangements in a community are essentially based on levels of authority. An understanding of the nature of

authority and its interrelationships in a specific community system is necessary if ideas are to be translated into programs. The first step is always very important as it can influence and affect subsequent actions. An association of mental health agency directors recognized this when they asked, "How did you get into the police department?" Entry into the police department like any system is not simple. To the uninitiated, it may appear that way, particularly if one enters the system from another discipline.

The first task of a program developer is to talk with the agency head—in this instance it was the chief of police. In one community an attempt was made to develop a police-social work diversion program by beginning with the juvenile officer. The program got started but failed to receive ongoing support. The juvenile officer did not have the authority to establish an ongoing program in a police agency without the approval of his chief and the sanction and support of senior officers in the department.

**Guidepost No. 1.** If you want to start a program in a community agency, you must first talk with the head of the agency in which your program will be lodged and "sell" him on your idea.

If someone the chief knows and trusts introduces you to the chief it may be helpful at least in "getting the ear" of the chief. Once the chief is interested in your ideas and believes they are congruent with his philosophy of police work or human services and would be useful to the department and community, he may plan for you to meet with supervisory staff to explain the program and how it would work. In this way senior ranking officers are involved to elicit their own reactions and how they think the staff would receive such a program.

If after meeting with the chief and supervisory staff it is still "go," the chief will start you through the political system to gain the necessary support, sanction, and appropriation. It is im-

<sup>1</sup> The writer designed and directed three pilot programs in Chicago area suburban communities and served as consultant to several others including the recently developed "Preventive Police-Social Work Project" in Hanover, Federal Republic of Germany.

portant for the social program developer to be alert and monitor this experience with the system as it progresses. You will want to observe relationships, identify the center(s) of power and control, note the official concerns and personal characteristics and interests of people you may be working with. You will also want to see how decisions are made and observe the customary ways of doing business in this community. You may wish to use this information about "how this system works" at a later date to achieve your program objectives. Once you learn how to "operate" in more than one system, it is easier to learn a third and a fourth, etc. As a result, you will likely develop deeper insights into your own organizational interrelationships as well as have greater facility and confidence in working cooperatively with a variety of systems.

*Guidepost No. 2.* Follow the guidance of the agency head. They usually know their community and political system as well as the process of introducing new people and programs into existing structures.

The chief of police can identify key community influentials—and groups—whose support will be useful in the planning and development or later operational phase. Preliminary meetings may occur with the city manager and the mayor and sometimes later with several key members of the city council before a meeting with the board. It is important to prepare yourself for each meeting just as a direct practice person would with an individual or family. Ask yourself, "Why are you getting together? What are your goals? What do you hope to accomplish? What is your strategy? What information will be required to 'sell' the idea? What kind of format will be most effective to influence your audience? Is there any preparation in the way of information, etc., that would be useful for the group to know prior to the meeting?" In one instance a village president had not prepared the council for the program developer's presentation. The outcome was literally a disaster. It was later learned that the village president was himself ambivalent toward the suggested program. He had some commitment and loyalty to an already existing program which a few board members felt wasn't working as well as expected. Some prior preparation with the village board could have insured a better reception to the new idea or else they might have decided not to entertain a proposal for a new

program thereby making the meeting with the program developer unnecessary.

Village officials usually have at least several concerns. They will want to know:

- (1) What is the program? How will it work?
- (2) Has it been tried anywhere else and with what results?
- (3) Why did you come to this community?
- (4) What will the program cost?
- (5) Does our community need this program?
- (6) Does the program developer have ample time and competence to direct the program, e.g., is he or she a person who has the personal attributes to work cooperatively with the political system and diverse groups in the community?
- (7) What are the projected political consequences of introducing this new program, i.e., how will it affect interprofessional relationships, other city departments as well as impact on the target population?

It may be useful to offer an illustration that will demonstrate how the program might work with a specific problem. Take your audience through the system so they can get a feeling for the program. Allow lots of time for questions. You will be more likely to obtain interest and even commitment when people are involved, contribute ideas and suggestions and clarify areas of uncertainty.

Questions No. 6 and No. 7 will be answered by the city officials and department heads as they assess the program and the program developer. They will be keenly interested in knowing what kind of a person you are, i.e., are you thoughtful or impulsive? Are you evenhanded or arbitrary? Do you have fixed, rigid ideas or are you flexible and openminded? They will want to know how you make decisions. Are you authoritarian or do you involve others in matters of mutual concern? How do you work with your peers and those in authority? How do you handle your own authority? Are you a team player? Will you consult on policy issues with governmental officials?

The process here is akin to being interviewed for a job. Of course, this is a two-way street and you will be making your own assessments too: You will be evaluating such issues as:

- (1) Can the key political leaders obtain the needed sanction and support to launch and maintain the program?
- (2) How much involvement and commitment can be mobilized? When assistance is needed in

obtaining supplementary outside funding, how much will the political leaders help?

- (3) How stable are the political arrangements in terms of the life of the project?

This brings us to *Guidepost No. 3*: Involvement and commitment is an essential ingredient for effecting beginning and continuing support by community officials.

An illustration of this principle can be seen in the recent development of a police-social work program in Hanover, West Germany. The program was initially sponsored by the Minister of Justice for Lower Saxony, Professor Hans-Dieter Schwind, with partial funding from the German Marshall Fund. Since the program was in the City of Hanover, sanction and support by the Lord Mayor, Herbert Schmalstieg was necessary. The achievement of this objective was an important step. The situation was particularly sensitive as the Minister of Justice and the Lord Mayor were of opposing political parties. A two-phase plan was designed:

- (1) A meeting with the Lord Mayor, the Minister of Justice, program director, and consultant to discuss the Lord Mayor's concerns regarding the program and to encourage his involvement.

- (2) To plan a visit for the Lord Mayor to the United States for a "firsthand" view of a police-social work program.

At the meeting the Lord Mayor expressed three concerns about a police-social work program in Hanover:

- (1) The political concern, i.e., the potential for role conflict and cooptation between police and social workers.

- (2) The impact of social work on community problems, e.g., are social workers theoretical or are they pragmatic, too?

- (3) The problems of minorities (Afghanists, Greeks, Yugoslavians, Italians, etc.) and the ability of the program to relate to the problems of these people, e.g., housing, medical care, parent-child culture conflict problems, problems of alienation, etc.

The Lord Mayor's concerns were similar in many respects to the experience with governmental officials in the United States when the program first began in their community. The background of the American social worker who would work in the Hanover program for the first year included experience as a police-social worker and work with minorities and displaced persons.

The Lord Mayor subsequently visited the United States and was exposed to a number of programs. He talked with governmental officials and practitioners to learn about problems and issues as well as to get a feeling of confidence in the capability of police-social work diversion.

Later the Lord Mayor reported he was well pleased with his visit and that he had learned a great deal. Correspondence from Hanover indicates the Lord Mayor is now feeling involved and is committed to the program. He has offered to assist the project in obtaining cooperation from some referral agencies that are reluctant to work with the police-social work program.

After most of the initial planning phase is completed, the program developer must himself begin to get more involved in the community.

*Guidepost No. 4.* The goals and objectives of the program and their priorities should serve as a guide to the nature and degree of community involvement at various points in time.

The kinds of information and relationships needed in beginning program development require careful thought and planning. The collection of information and the development of supportive and service relationships often go hand in hand. A useful reference point for getting to know a community is your own experience in relocating from one community to another. Most everyone can relate to this as they have moved at some time in their life. Ask yourself what kinds of information did you want to know before and after the move, and what additional would have been useful to know? Transportation, schools, churches, banks, shopping, safety, reputation of police, fire departments, city services, and the quality of life are a few of the things most people are interested in. What resources are available for obtaining this information? A few information resources are the Chamber of Commerce, City Hall, the library, the International City Managers Association publication, "The Municipal Year Book," community influentials, directors of agencies and institutions, especially those with whom you will work.

The police are a natural resource, a storehouse of community data which has been little appreciated and used in social planning. The police chief can identify community influentials whose support may be needed for program development. He knows how people relate to each other and how they behave organizationally and therefore can be a key leader in community development.

In the areas of delinquency prevention and crime control, the police are especially knowledgeable about the financial and political aspects of the community, history of community problems, available resources, gaps in services, and general information about the ambiance of life in the community.

*Guidepost No. 5.* In order to successfully develop a program, the social program developer must have workable relationships and become a partner in community development. They must become invested in the life and concerns of the community, i.e., attend community meetings, social affairs, serve on agency boards, and be available for advice to city officials in their area of expertise. This kind of progressive and ongoing investment is the substance of successful program development. When you invest in the life of a community, your relationship with the community will deepen. Experience indicates that a new person or program in a community is like a "new kid on the block." Agency executives will want to know: Who is he, why is he there, what does he hope to accomplish and how long does he plan to stay? Furthermore, they want to know what their relationship will be, i.e., what can he do for them and what effect will his actions have on their program? Will they work cooperatively and in what area? Will they compete for funds and/or clients? Will this new program be threatening to the existence of established agencies? Will agency functioning change?

Experience in developing police-social work programs demonstrated that two things emerged from community contacts early on:

(1) That some people had ambivalent feelings about the presence of the project in their community. These feelings were typical of the feelings of some police officers, social workers, university colleagues, and people from the funding agency. From the communities' point of view, they were reacting to a stranger in their midst, an outsider from the big state university, of whom one community influential said, "you don't even know the names of the streets." Others expressed a fear the program would permit criminals to roam the streets.

(2) That early contacts later proved worthwhile, when requests were made for client services.

"The ability of the program developer to deal

<sup>2</sup> Harvey Treger, "Wheaton-Niles and Maywood Police-Social Service Projects," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, September 1976, p. 34.

with community reactions to a new situation is observed and evaluated and helps the social program developer to establish an identity as well as his competence."<sup>2</sup> This dynamic interaction is part of a continuum of change. Community and agency relationships will develop as the program becomes operational and service requests are initiated. The consequences of being interdependent with many agencies and systems is that you tend to broaden the base of understanding and support for your program while building linkages for service delivery; you also learn about additional resources and gaps in services. Furthermore, the broader the resource base the more impact and choices a system has. Community problems and situations are frequently complex and interlocking. They require inputs from many professionals and systems working cooperatively as a team to maximize its impact on the problem. In this way each profession may add to its knowledge and expand its services to new populations. As a result, better coordinated and more comprehensive services could be offered. Interprofessional-intersystem efforts however are not without risks as differing orientations and values can be conflictual and there may be sensitive borderline areas where flexibility and mediation are required.

*Guidepost No. 6.* Programs of social provision should be designed to fit the needs of the people being served.

The experience of developing programs in a variety of communities with different populations including working class, middle class, upper middle, and minority groups has created a sensitivity to the uniqueness of the life styles of each community. It's not like setting up a franchise hamburger or fried chicken establishment. If it is, chances are you will not be in business too long. It takes time to get on board with a community, just as it does with a client. The collection of significant information about the community being served is cumulative and requires assessment for it to become a useful input in planning and program development. An example is Maywood, Illinois. Maywood has very large working class and minority group populations. Approximately 30 percent of the police-social work program clients were either receiving some form of public aid or had income which was just above the public assistance level. To establish an effective program in this community, the staff and students needed to demonstrate their in-

terest and availability to the population referred for services. Minority group populations tend to be distrustful of government and authorities and are reluctant to become involved in government-sponsored programs in traditional settings. To stimulate motivation for social services most people referred to the Maywood Project were seen as soon as possible in their own homes rather than in the police department, unless social assessment indicated otherwise. Unavailability of child care arrangements, lack of transportation and funds were additional reasons for the frequent use of home visits as the setting of choice for offering services in this community. It is believed that if services were not tailored to the life style and needs for this community, the utilization of services would have been markedly diminished. Furthermore, interpretation to referral agencies of acceptable service patterns and followup with the agencies and clients was necessary to insure a high level of referral acceptance.

An open house in the beginning phase of the program was helpful in broadening our acquaintance with the community and for bringing diverse groups, e.g., agency directors, funders, university officials, police and social workers together in an informal evening where new relationships and followup opportunities could develop. Representatives of a Black Muslim group attended the Maywood open house and wrote a letter supporting the program which was used as evidence of community support when second year funding was sought.

*Guidepost No. 7.* The development of a new program in a community can be understood from a systems perspective.

The police-social service program is actually a system within systems.<sup>3</sup> When working with a range of professionals in different systems, it becomes necessary to be sensitive to the impact of decisionmaking upon the interrelationship of their respective systems, e.g., the police-social service program was in the law enforcement system part of the justice system; working within the university system, and within the systems of professional social work and social welfare. A decision in one program could affect the interrelationships of the program with other parts of the system(s).

<sup>3</sup> See a system within systems diagram on this page. Harvey Treger, et al., "Process in Development of the Project," *The Police-Social Work Team*. Springfield, Illinois; Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1975, p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> Alex Indles, *What is Sociology?*, "Models of Society in Sociological Analysis," Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964, p. 36.

## THE SOCIAL SERVICE PROJECT-A SYSTEM



### WITHIN SYSTEMS

Inkles has stated, "Changes in one part of society have important implications for other parts of the system (thereby) enabling us better to understand why so often innovations are so slowly adopted."<sup>4</sup> If system reactions to contemplated policy decisions are not thought through and planned for, unexpected and undesired reactions and impediments to a program could occur. When the police-social work program became operational in Hanover, West Germany (August 1979), the professional social work association reacted strongly to the idea of social work and police cooperation. They feared the police would coopt the social workers and decided to boycott the program. Information revealed that the agencies in the community had not been involved in the planning and did not fully understand the nature of the program and what the social workers would be doing. They were feeling left out, and like an orphan, they were expressing their fears and anger. It was apparent that a step in the process of community involvement was left out and now needed to be made up. An unexpected consequence was that it brought the social workers closer to the police who could identify with them as a beleaguered group under external threat.

Another example of system interaction occurred when an irate judge stormed down to a community police department to lecture juvenile officers that he didn't want youths who should properly be before him referred by police officers to the project. Some prosecutors are also concerned that police officers and social workers may invade their area of discretion. It has been stated that "if substantial numbers of offenders are diverted by local law enforcement to community based agencies (or to units such as a police-social work program) there will be in all likelihood reduced inputs to prosecution, adjudication, and correctional agencies. Lessened inputs will alleviate some of the backlog in the judicial system and reduce caseload pressure in probation and parole and size on institutional population. While these occurrences are desirable, at some point in time the bureaucratic instinct for survival may be threatened. Reactions protective of the establishment may set in."<sup>5</sup> Although new programs to resolve community problems are desired by community leaders, they are also resisted because invariably they challenge established norms and relationships creating conflict and disequilibrium in a system. It is this effect that innovation has on a system that must be anticipated and coped

with if a new program is to be sanctioned and supported. Any new group or program must either become integrated into the fabric of the system, assimilated, or expelled. The development of interprofessional and inter systems cooperation requires mutual involvement in planning and program development which relates to the concerns and sensitivities of the various professions and systems involved as well as client groups in a dynamic and ongoing manner.

Getting into a community and knowing what to do when you get there is something akin to learning to drive a stick shift car. You begin with shifting the *first gear*—getting into the agency and political community; *second gear*—becoming acquainted with the community, its influentials, agencies, institutions, and systems, and then shifting into *third gear* with ongoing communication, information dissemination and input into the wider area of social welfare program development. You put it all together in a continuous manner with fine tuning as new information develops and situations change over time. This dynamic process can help to achieve the goal of a true partnership with reciprocal benefits to the program, the cooperating professions, the political structure, the funding and sponsoring agencies, and the client.

<sup>5</sup> Robert M. Carter, "The Diversion of Offenders," *FEDERAL PROBATION*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 4 (1972), p. 35.

END