

VI World Congress of Psychiatry Honolulu, Hawaii

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WORKING WITH A PATIENTS' SELF-HELP ORGANISATION. Hugh Parfitt M.B., F.R.C.P.(C). Kitsilano Community Care Team, Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

The origin, development and current activities of the Mental Patients Association (M.P.A.) are described. The experience of a community psychiatrist who worked in cooperation with the group over a three year period is presented.

The M.P.A. operates five residences for ex-mental patients, a drop-in centre and a newspaper. It is a vigorous crusader for the civil rights of mental patients and it does not hesitate to criticize the psychiatric profession.

Among issues confronted by the M.P.A. in the period under study were: 1) the problem of violence; 2) pharmacotherapy versus the 'Laingian' approach in the treatment of psychosis; 3) community hostility, especially in response to the bizarre behaviour of a few members.

The emergence is described of a fruitful working relationship between the M.P.A. and a community psychiatry team in the face of continuing anti-psychiatry rhetoric. It is suggested that psychiatry and self-help organisations such as the M.P.A. can find ample common ground since they share the same goals: the attainment of self-respect, independence and personal comfort by those people known as mental patients.

Subject index: Please supply no more than 3 key words or phrases descriptive of your abstract, for inclusion in the subject index of the printed volume of abstracts.

1. **Self-help groups**

2. **Community psychiatry**

3.

Name of author (*must be a registered member*) who will deliver the paper.

First author ☒ Yes ☐ No

Name **Hugh PARFITT M.B., F.R.C.P.(C).**

(Please underline *last name* as it should appear in alphabetical listing for author index.)

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