

Community Mental Health On Kitsilano

Community care for people with emotional problems is coming to Kitsilano.

The city and the provincial government have agreed to cooperate in a new program of mental health care for greater Vancouver. The new program hopes to replace much of the present hospital treatment with community centered facilities.

Dr. Hugh Parfitt, a psychiatrist presently working with B.C. Government Home Treatment Service, said the program is designed to cut down hospital admissions. "Our directions from Victoria are to help keep people out of Riverview", he said. Riverview is the major mental health facility for the Lower Mainland and is located in Essondale B.C., 25 miles East of Vancouver.

The project is to involve the locating of services in the community so that a person with emotional difficulties need not necessarily leave his home. "We feel treatment can be more effective in a disturbed person's own environment with a minimum of dislocation and a maximum of community support", Dr. Parfitt said.

The project will involve team-work with volunteers and interested community members, psychiatrists, psychologists, volunteers and in-common community care programs. "We don't want to be a group of professionals descending on a community. We want community involvement. There will be a public information meeting in Kitsilano on Wednesday, May 16th at 7:30 p.m. in Kitsilano United Church, 2490 West 2nd Avenue. The purpose of the meeting will be to explain in greater detail the program and goals of community care in Mental Health.

Speakers will be Dr. Parfitt, Barry Coull from the Mental Patients Association and Joyce Marvin, a social worker from Kit's House. Suggestions from citizens of Kitsilano will be welcomed at the meeting.