

Callahan employees get them back on job

WILSONVILLE — The injuries most frequently suffered by workers seeking treatment at Workmen's Compensation's Callahan Center near here most often are located at the ends of the spine: the lower back, coupled with psychological injuries resulting from a prolonged absence from the job.

OSEA member Susan Mears and her colleagues in the psychology department are the first to see the patients who come to Callahan Center. They conduct diagnostic interviews of each of the patients as they arrive. From that they either will schedule further consultation or simply keep in touch with the patient through the therapists in occupational, recreational or industrial therapy who see the patients regularly during the course of their stay.

In light of the innovative work being done in the two-year-old center, the therapists, psychologists and other workers at the Callahan Center were stung by a report recently issued by the Portland City Club which was critical of the institution and called for its closure, said OSEA Employee Representative Tom Gunn, who is assigned to the Center. Several things have changed since the center opened and the city club conducted its research. Mears noted that in other instances the City Club's report has been used to upgrade an on-going program.

"All the patients here have been seen by doctors for a long time and they haven't improved," said Mears. When the medical doctors run out of ideas, the patients are sent to Callahan as a last hope.

Mears uses biofeedback to help patients relax and to control other causes of pain. She says it takes 10 to 12 sessions to teach someone how to really relax.

The patients who are in greatest need of Mears' skills are ones who have been off the job for a long time. "Their days have changed, the wife may not be used to having them around all the time and they can't do all they could before," she points out. Those discouraging conditions, coupled often with chronic pain, creates psychological injuries which may be as great as the physical injury.

Teaching the patients to use their bodies in new and safer ways is the job of the therapists. Occupational therapist Kathy Luiten in many respects is teaching Callahan patients to do all the things most of us take for granted: to bend, sit, stand, get out of bed, stoop, get into and out of a car and to move. All the employees who spoke to The OSEA News said that lower back problems were the most frequently seen. Luiten teaches the patients to use their legs more, thus saving their backs from serious injury.

Bruce Priem in physical therapy says that the way most of us live and behave simply are setting ourselves up for injury. Couple that with the hazards of Oregon's most prominent industry — forest products — and the need for the Callahan Center becomes evident. Priem said he hopes to change the way patients look at the rest of their lives. He wants to provide the patients with an exercise program that they will stick to at home. He also has been trying to get some cooperation with the private contractor who

runs the food service to correct diets. So far, he said he has had little success. Before he looks at the long term he must get the patients into good physical condition without bothering the injury. Most patients have gotten out of shape because of the inactivity during their recovery period.

Despite the best efforts of Mears, Luiten and Priem, many of the patients will not be able to return to the job they held before their injury. Al Jensen tries to provide a solution to that problem. He has tests, actual hands-on tests, that can sort out which of the some 25,000 jobs in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles a man or woman might be best suited for. And the tests are hard to beat. If a patient has been trying to disguise a lower back problem, Jensen's tests will bring it out from hiding.

Once the tests are completed, the industrial therapy shops at Callahan are well equipped to

Two-year old center keeps innovating

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help a man or woman get started on a trade. And Jensen said that he will be using other facilities at the Center for his job training. For example, a patient interested in landscaping, gardening or building and grounds maintenance may go to work for OSEA Job Representative Chris Ellis.

Supporting all of these workers are clericals and the administrators who keep the center running. OSEA's Wilsonville Chapt. 55 secretary-treasurer Joan Hanegan works in the word processing center.

She transcribes medical records and other material. However, the modern center also is equipped to transcribe dictation which comes into a recorder from Salem. The word processing center is one of the few places at Callahan which has an adjusted work schedule; three of the workers there work four 10-hour days.

Another important support job is performed by Chapt. 55 vice president Jan. Martin. Martin is a driver. She takes injured workers to and from the Center. Many, because of their

injuries cannot drive a car; her work keeps them from becoming too dependent on family or friends.

Oregon's Callahan Center created the concept of treatment that it provides. The money that is saved by treating and retraining injured workers nearly pays for the treatment. Injured workers who have been through the center are twice as successful at finding and keeping jobs than those who have not. Callahan follows up on its patients two months, six months and a year after they leave. It's constantly upgrading its program and developing new ones. The workers there, all of them from therapists to clericals, know that the change in lifestyle that a severe injury causes can be a very scary thing. But as one person put it, patients at Callahan Center are "so involved in projects, they forget that they hurt."

Dear Mr. President:

"FINE PRINT" IN TODAY'S HEALTH INSURANCE: R_x FOR BANKRUPTCY

Almost everyone has had experience with the 'fine print' in insurance policies. 'Fine print' means that losses suffered very often aren't covered. Many a family has been wiped out because of 'fine print.'

In health insurance (if a person is lucky enough to be working and have coverage—40 million Americans have no protection at all), the 'fine print' is usually called a 'deductible' or 'co-insurance.'

These words are gobbledegook. In plain English, they mean a person isn't completely covered for a variety of things that can happen. They mean the patient must pay, out of his or her own pocket, some if not all the bill run up with an eye doctor, at the drug counter, in the doctor's office, in the dentist's chair.

Here's how these gimmicks can hurt you. Say a person has a chronic condition that requires constant medication. The bill for drugs comes to \$100. The bill is sent to the insurance company. The first thing the company does is subtract \$25 (that's the 'deductible'). Then, the company pays only 80 percent of the balance (that's the 'co-insurance').

In this case, a person would receive \$60 from the insurance company. The other \$40 is paid out of the patient's pocket.

If you add all these gimmicks up for the whole country, it turns out we're now paying \$39 billion a year out of pocket—one-third of all health care bills for the United States. (And remember, that \$39 billion doesn't include the premiums we now pay for Blue Cross or to a private insurance company.) The \$39 billion is 'extra.' And the 'extras' can ruin a family, wipe out a lifetime of savings, force a person into bankruptcy.

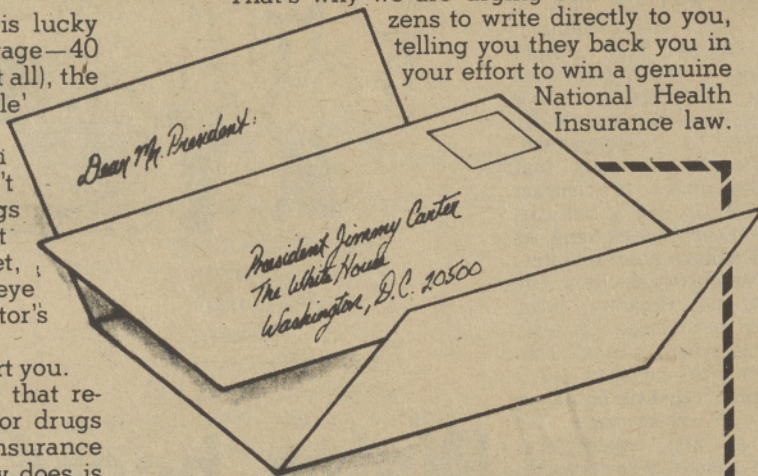
The \$39 billion in 'extras' we're now paying, Mr. President, is almost the same amount as all the corporations in the United States paid in 1976 in taxes to the Federal government. Yes, all corporations—Exxon, General Motors, General Electric, Mobil, IBM, Ford—and tens of thousands more.

These shocking figures, Mr. President, point up again the fraudulent and costly nature of the present health care system.

When you pledged to change the system,

you learned very quickly the American people were behind you. Every reputable poll shows about two-thirds of all Americans support your position for national health insurance.

That's why we are urging our fellow citizens to write directly to you, telling you they back you in your effort to win a genuine National Health Insurance law.



As an American, concerned about the state of your health and your family's health, as well as your pocketbook, write to President Carter today. Urge him to propose National Health Insurance to protect your family—all American families—against the hazards of illness and bankruptcy.

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