

Innovations and Organizations (New York, 1973); Yin R *et al.*: Tinkering with the System: Technological Innovations in State and Local Services (Lexington, Mass., 1977). For an analysis of the social forces affecting the process of reform, see Miller A *et al.*: A Theory of Social Reform (Cambridge, Mass., 1977)

22. See, however, recommendations for decentralization and uniform screening procedures in Roesch R and Golding S: A Systems Analysis of Competency to Stand Trial Procedure (Urbana, 1977)

Editorial Note

Pre-trial psychiatric examinations represent one of the greatest areas of "defensive law" and unnecessary over-utilization of forensic psychiatric services in the United States and Canada. If we are unable to halt this waste of hospital services and beds, we must face the continued necessity for additional funding for the care of these patients in hospitals thereby making less funds available for community programs.

Should not every state have a diversified outpatient pre-trial screening program? Then, only those cases that absolutely require hospitalization for their evaluations will need to be hospitalized. Many jurisdictions have reported false positives or "no indication of incompetency or lack of responsibility" for between 70 and 80 per cent of all those for whom incompetency or insanity pleas are made. Such a high level of negative findings clearly indicates the necessity for the development of screening programs in order to save services that are in short supply.

It is interesting to see that the two major procedures that have been developed in the area of competency evaluation, the McGarry Instruments, as discussed in this paper, have not been effectively utilized except in one of the four jurisdictions that were exposed to them. Does this mean that the instruments are not satisfactory, or does this mean that we are so established in our ways that we cannot make changes and adopt modern techniques? Does this mean that we are such strong individuals that we must all do it our own way, or does this mean that we don't want to change anything? At the very least, one would have hoped that the establishment of these two instruments would have caused a flurry of excitement with several research projects testing their validity, etc. Apparently numerous individuals have been using the instruments, yet, to my knowledge, there has been no new research with them; and this paper seems to indicate that there has been very little utilization throughout a "system."

It is hoped that with the requirement that community mental health centers become more involved with services to the courts these instruments will be utilized. In fact, I would predict that if they are not, the level of competency evaluations will be so variable and inconsistent from community mental health center to community mental health center that psychiatry's public image will be further tarnished.

Those conducting competency examinations certainly should give a new look at the McGarry Instruments as well as the development of decentralized pre-trial screening programs in their jurisdictions. The two can go hand-in-hand as Tennessee has shown.

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