

CHAPTER 68

AN ACT concerning State psychiatric facilities and supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

C.30:1-12a Definitions relative to psychiatric facilities.

1. As used in this act:

"Clinical treatment staff" means a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, physical therapist or social worker licensed pursuant to Title 45 of the Revised Statutes, an occupational, recreation, art or music therapist or a substance abuse counselor.

"Nursing direct care staff" means a Human Services Assistant, Human Services Technician or a nurse licensed pursuant to Title 45 of the Revised Statutes.

C.30:1-12b Unannounced site visits to State psychiatric facilities.

2. a. The Commissioner of Human Services shall designate staff who are not employed at a State psychiatric facility listed in R.S.30:1-7 to conduct unannounced site visits to randomly check staffing on various shifts at a State psychiatric facility, at least three times during a calendar year. During the site visit, the designated staff shall review: the daily operation of the facility, including, the actual deployment of clinical treatment staff and nursing direct care staff on various shifts to determine whether the actual deployment of staff meets the documented staffing plan of the facility; the system for reporting any information concerning alleged patient abuse or professional misconduct as provided for in P.L.1997, c.70 (C.30:4-3.15 et seq.); the operation of therapeutic programs or activities for patients; and any other aspect of the facility which the commissioner deems appropriate.

b. The commissioner shall provide and implement, on an ongoing basis, surveillance procedures designed to identify problems related to patient care at a State psychiatric facility. These procedures shall include, but not be limited to, the use of security cameras and the use of persons to perform covert investigations of the daily operation of the facility. Persons performing covert investigations shall assume roles which do not suggest their actual function.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved April 16, 1997.