

## **31/94 Care of People with Intellectual Disabilities**

(A report from a Synod-Committee.)

1. This resolution reads -  
“Synod requests the Standing Committee to appoint a committee, including representatives from the Home Mission Society and Social Issues Committee, to bring a report and possible recommendations to the next meeting of Synod, concerning the care of school-aged and post school-aged intellectually disabled people in the community.”
2. The Committee appointed is comprised of the Rev John McIntyre and the Rev John Livingstone.
3. Having researched the current position in the Diocese re Care of the Intellectually Disabled, both children of school age and post school age - the following conclusion was reached.
4. The Anglican Home Mission Society provides such a service in a number of ways -
  - (a) Kingsdene Special School and Hostel caters for 32 children from 5 to 18 years.
  - (b) A number of group homes (3) are attached to the school and within those homes older children learn basic living skills to equip them for life after Kingsdene.
  - (c) Respite care services are offered through “Westlink” both for families and children. Children are taken into care while their families have a break. Such care includes farm holiday etc.
  - (d) The THURINA early intervention programme provides, as implies, support for children at an early age (pre-school) to enhance their social and learning skills.
  - (e) From 1 July 1995 AHMS is taking over the Maranatha Home at Hornsby which caters for young adults. Some of these adults are involved in “sheltered” work shop programmes.
5. All these services, with the exception of Westlink, operate on a Monday to Friday basis - giving families opportunities to be with their children at the weekends and also helping to keep costs at manageable limits.
6. Funding bodies (State and Federal Governments) have policies which would rather see children out of hostel accommodation into group homes or other alternatives. AHMS continues to argue for the style of Hostel work at Kingsdene as it provides a greater capacity to care for those more severely disabled.

7. In June 1995 the State Government, through the Department of Community Services, allocated 300 supported accommodation places across NSW for people with disabilities. Although this is obviously something to be commended, the Anglican Church feels that it cannot do any more through AHMS than it is already doing for the following reasons.

- (a) Available Government funding never fully meets the costs of programmes and with over \$1m already spent in this work it is beyond the capacity of AHMS to pay for additional work.
- (b) This is a specialised and intensive work and it is (sadly) difficult to find suitable Christian staff to work in this field.
- (c) To expand the work to other areas of the Diocese than those already covered would need a whole new department set up within Care Force, bringing it to an unmanageable size.

#### **Recommendations**

8. That Synod be aware of the excellent work already being done by the AHMS through its Disability Services.

9. That Christian people be called on to act as respite carers - both in the parishes where they are aware of families with intellectually disabled children and through the AHMS.

10. That the State Government be urged to review its funding of disabilities services so that costs may be more easily met by voluntary organisations.

JOHN McINTYRE  
JOHN LIVINGSTONE

15 July 1995