

# ALCOHOLIC CURE STARTS HERE

## Churches, Agencies Pooling Facilities Against Alcoholism

Some of the major church community members of the City of Fairbanks are now undertaking a project designed to alleviate the problem of alcoholism in the city.

Known informally as COMPAS, Community Property and Service Corporation of Fairbanks, the non-profit sponsoring organization is composed initially of the Episcopal, Catholic, 1st Methodist, and University Presbyterian Churches.

The project is known as the Fairbanks Alcoholic Rehabilitation Center and it is located in the Episcopal churches' St. Matthews Hall in the city.

The program of the Center said, "This facility is established solely for the male alcoholic. There are no barriers to admission through accident or race, creed, color or political affiliations.

"The need for a similar facility for women is recognized, but it is not felt feasible to operate the center co-educationally at this time."

The sponsoring organization said in its report:

"The first project undertaken by COMPAS has been the alcoholic rehabilitation center located in St. Matthews Hall. The Center began operating on November 1,

1967, with ten men in residence, will have room for 16 members by December 1, and should expand to 30 during the coming year."

Admission is by direct application by the alcoholic, or by referral from a sponsoring agency. All admissions will be screened by a reviewing committee composed of members of the advisory board of the facility.

This committee is chiefly made up of sober members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The COMPAS will work closely with that organization in its operation.

The following are the criteria for admission:

1. That the applicant be an alcoholic.
2. That he wishes to do something about his problem.
3. That he be willing to abide by the house rules of the facility, and to make constructive use of the resources offered.

4. That abstinence be practiced while a resident.

In addition, the committee will evaluate the applicant's alcoholic history. Incurables who do not seem to have at least a fair chance for recovery will be eliminated, the program said.

The sponsoring agency will review the history of

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the client's adjustment within the residence at two week intervals. Progress, or lack of it, will be evaluated.

Participating agencies in the individual recovery program will be asked to sit in at these reviews.

Participating agencies are: Alaska State Employment Office, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Office of Economic Opportunity funded resources, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Termination of facility care will be by plan—unless the client terminates it sooner than planned. This action will be on an individual basis in cooperation with the sponsoring agency.

When the client is released, after-care arrangements may include continued service on both home-visit and office interview basis—if this is wished by the client and is agreeable with the cooperating agency.

Continued and intensive relationship with the program of Alcoholic Anonymous shall be part of all individual plans.

"The sponsoring agency shall be responsible for family casework," the program said. "We strongly recommend that the desirability of the Alanon program be interpreted to the family and that they be encouraged to make use of this resource."

"Family visits to the client are encouraged. These should be by plan and the family should be completely aware of the facility program in order that conflicts in

their own planning be avoided.

"The Center is not in competition with any existing agency or service. Our efforts are intended to compliment and extend other services.

"Primary program emphasis will be on the problem of alcoholism.

"We recognize that this compulsion, although an illness in itself, is but a symptom of other problems. Without a plan which includes the latter, continued sobriety is doubtful."

For this reason, the program includes the following:

1. Close liaison with medical and mental health resources. This includes referral from the Center for medical and mental health services, and carrying out in the Center the recommendations of the physician and/or mental health practitioner.

2. Complete cooperation with sponsoring or collateral agencies. This will include, but not confined to, case conferences, progress reports, cooperative and related planning, and supplying to the sponsoring agency necessary data for their own needs.

3. Referral for vocational planning and/or training to proper resources. The agencies mentioned earlier will be consulted for this purpose, and since the alcoholic is basically a disadvantaged and handicapped person pending demonstrable recovery, COMPAS plans to work primarily through the office of

Vocational Rehabilitation.

4. Program planning in cooperation with state, federal and local conferences, committees, and commissions on alcoholism.

5. Keeping and maintaining case records.

6. Accumulation and distribution of educational information on alcoholism.

7. Providing public information speakers from staff.

The goals of the program are:

1. To help the alcoholic to achieve sobriety.

2. To assist him in re-establishing avenues of communication with his society.

3. To assist him to re-orient himself in terms of time and priorities.

4. To introduce him to resources available to continue to remain sober following his stay at the Center.

5. To help him to regain some measure of a feeling of self worth, to become self-determining and to find suitable outlets for a returning desire for attainment.

6. To make available to him an opportunity for a vocational plan.

7. To attain, as nearly as possible, an optimum condition of physical and mental health.

8. To assist him to re-adjust to his responsibilities, family and personal ties,

and to the social complex in which he will live.

9. To provide a focal point upon which all resources for the arrest of alcoholism may focus.

10. To provide information for the continued study and treatment planning of alcoholism.

COMPAS board of directors has hired Robert Carroll as director of the Center. Carroll was formerly employed by the BIA as a supervisor of social work. Maynard Eakan is serving as assistant to Carroll.

The Board of Directors is currently composed of three members from each of the cooperating church congregations plus six members elected from the community at large.

The board was organized through the efforts of Rev. William Warren and Rev. Thomas Connolly, acting director and a community development specialist from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington.

Members of the Board are: Lynn Davidson, Richard Frank, Joseph Gilbert, Kenneth Haycraft, George Hollett, Shirley Jennings, Taine Lahti, Joseph Lawlor, Ralph Lewis, Robert Nearing, Rev. John McBride, Robert Parish, William Staats, Mary Lou Stealey, June Ulz, and Rev. William Warren.