

THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASHLEY YOUTH DETENTION CENTRE MET AT THE LOWER NORTH YOUTH JUSTICE RESIDENTIAL CENTRE, PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND ON TUESDAY 22 MAY 2007.

DISCUSSION WITH **Ms REBECCA BREW-HARTLEY**, ACTING MANAGER, AND **Mr MARK PAINTER**.

Mr PAINTER - You will see a big difference between this place and that in Christchurch. Lower North was built in 1999 and was the first purpose-built youth justice residence in the country. It looks quite prison-like, with big concrete walls. It is fairly stark. Down south you will see that latest units. You will see very few concrete walls; there are open fences - a marked difference of environment with a different feel. The residence is split into four wings with 15 young people on each side.

CHAIR (Mr Hall) - What about prior to 2004?

Mr PAINTER - It was secured family homes, though not very secure. We still use family homes but not for youth justice young people. The serious youth justice offenders come here. We have 106 beds nationally, so they go where we have a bed available. Often they are sitting in a police cell waiting for a bed. We try to keep them as close as possible to their own communities.

Mrs JAMIESON - Has the profile of the youth changed, the behaviours and so on?

Mr PAINTER - About 60 per cent of our kids have committed violent offences - rapes, aggravated robberies, serious assaults. Five or ten years ago it would mainly have been for cars and burglaries, but they have diminished and they are dealt with in the public system. Other than those you get mental health issues, gang issues, social issues, behaviour issues.

Mrs JAMIESON - Do you have an assessment process?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - A lot goes on out in the field, so a lot of youth justice people never come to residence. We are here talking about our top offenders. We have a national admissions officer to coordinate placements into beds. All the social workers throughout the country feed into him the situation with their young offenders. He coordinates the placement of young people with the three residences. I liaise with the field social worker and I do a pre-assessment before they even come. I look at the young person's safety, and particularly how they will mix with the other young people in the residence and the staff. So I try to assess those risks prior to the young person's arrival. Once I have identified them I work closely with the management team in formulating a risk-management plan. Those plans are drawn up in a risk-group meeting. We draw up a response to the risk and then that document goes to all staff so that they know at any time what sort of risk they are dealing with and what plans are in place to manage the risk.

Mrs JAMIESON - If you have someone who has a mental health problem, do you stream that person into a different form of incarceration?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - No, we do have the ability to do that. The reality is that the judge has remanded him to this facility, so we do not have the ability to send him somewhere else. We have to accept him in the first instance. I would already have been liaising in terms of meeting his needs. We would be working with the local group from health and get someone to visit and perhaps help with medication or the risk management plan. We have to get creative. With serious cases of mental health we have had to work with the national office to put a particular plan in place for that young person. Sometimes that involves staffing, so we have a supervisor and social workers totally dedicated to that young person to keep him stable and consistent. We are creative around the management of that. Also we have a case-work team here who do not work on shift. Their role is to advocate for the needs of the young person. They are doing a lot of work with psychiatrists about getting that young person to a more suitable facility than here. Ultimately we are at the mercy of the courts. If the judge wants him there then we cannot do anything about that.

Mr MARTIN - What are your staffing ratios?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have the two main units and there are 15 kids in each. Each unit will have a supervisor and at least five staff, sometimes six depending on leave and so on. We have a shift between 6 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. and the next shift from 2.30 p.m. to 10 p.m. The shifts rotate over a three-weekly cycle. Then we have a permanent night team, which does only nights, but they rotate within the group. It has a team leader and about six others. That is for the whole residence. In New Zealand we have the Resource Management Act and when each building is completed it has a condition, and one of ours is to maintain the residence at 30 young people.

Mr WILKINSON - What about programs?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have a program supervisor at the moment, and hope we will get a program manager. At the moment his role is to coordinate internal programs, ones that the staff might develop themselves. We have staff from a range of backgrounds - army and so on. They do team building, social skills and recreational skills programs. We have a supervisor to coordinate that and ensure there is a rationale for the programs. His role is also to coordinate outside services. He works with external providers to supply drug and alcohol education, essential health education, living skills, vocational skills. We also offer a forklift-driving program. The young people can get a licence at the end of it. We also have a sponsor school that provides vocational-based training within the school curriculum. They work closely with an agricultural provider who gives training in fencing, tractor and chainsaw.

Mr MARTIN - How many hours work in school?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - It's a normal school day - 8.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m.; six hours a day and five days a week. When school operates out in the real world it also operates here. We don't care about your age or whether you have not been to school for two years; when you are here you go to school.

Mr WILKINSON - What do think you can do better? What do you think are the major benefits are - the good things - of what you have and what do you think are the things that you should be doing better?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - I think there are some things that we are doing really well and one of them is risk management. We are very good at identifying risks and managing them. We also review that. We get to know the young person, we manage them and then we review those decisions. So I think we are very good at managing young people. We have interesting dynamics around having gang tensions and what have you. We only have two units to manage. The other residents, as you will see, have four. So that is very tricky. So risk management is a major focus for us.

Mr MARTIN - I am interested in this gang issue. How do you do that with two units?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have a zero tolerance on any gang behaviour. We also do not allow gang colours. So the young people are not allowed to wear red or blue because those are predominantly the gang colours - red being the Mongrel Mob and blue being the Black Power. There are also gang factions under that, like the Crypts and the Bloods who are blue and red. So because that is -

Mr WILKINSON - Not with the bloods, my footy team

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Predominantly because they are the two main colours, we do not allow those colours and we do not allow gang signs. They are not allowed to draw gang art and they are not allowed to have gang art in their room. They draw a fist for the Black Power and the Mongrel Mob's logo is a bulldog. So we have to manage that. We have to maintain zero tolerance to that.

That is one way. The other way is that we look at the mix of the two units. So we really do that assessment part that is an emphasis on that and working out whether this young person will manage himself within the unit and the other young people that we have there and if we have to move people around, we have to move people around.

Mr MARTIN - Is this a racial issue?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - No, I would not say so. We have predominantly Maori young people.

CHAIR - So the two gangs - the Mongrel Mob and the Black Power - are all predominantly Maori? The white blokes do not get involved in those and they are not part of that culture?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Interestingly it does not tend to become a white and black issue. Occasionally you get a little bit of that but not generally. It is just quite an interesting dynamic. You would expect that the young white boys would get picked on and they do not necessarily. It is not a predominant issue for us.

We have a secure unit, which is a smaller bed unit. There are seven beds in that unit and there is a higher staff-to-young-people ratio in there, depending how many young people

are down there. But that unit is designed for those kids who become unsafe out in the two open units. So that is a strategic way that we can manage it as well. The grounds are risk of harm to themselves or to others. There is another ground, which is escaping or attempting to escape. Touch wood, we do not use that ground very often because we manage, we are vigilant and we reduce the opportunities for escaping.

Mr MARTIN - We heard yesterday that there were a high percentage of escapes years ago, and that you have overcome that.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - After 2004 we learned a lot of things, not just about the issue with girls but also about our staffing levels and just working smarter, I think. We discovered quite a lot about ourselves. We changed our management structure, which I think had a big impact as well.

CHAIR - Can you just describe how you manage that and what the structure is? Are you the manager?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - No, I am not.

CHAIR - You are a site manager?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - A site manager. We have two practice managers and then we have our supervisor, Yvonne, who manages the team. So it is quite hierarchical.

CHAIR - So two practice managers you said?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes.

CHAIR - What is their role distinctly?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Their focus is on practice.

CHAIR - Operational?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes. We have one who predominantly looks at the types of work that goes on around legal liaison professionals advocating for the young people, planning and all those sorts of things. Then we have one who is particularly focused on the work that goes on the floor.

CHAIR - Do you have team leaders amongst the youth workers or the social workers themselves?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have the supervisor who would be the team leader. Then they lead the practice within the team. Then you would have residential social worker and a youth worker.

Mr MARTIN - Can you tell us what went wrong 2004?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - I think there were a number of issues.

Mr PAINTER - We had a bad mix of kids and we had some really violent young people. We had some staff practices that were not good. Our staffing numbers were not great.

Mr MARTIN - What were the bad practices?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Complacency more than anything.

Mrs JAMIESON - What about consistency of authority amongst the staff?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - I think there was probably a lack of leadership. I think that is not a secret as well.

Mr MARTIN - Right from the top?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes I think so. That is partly why our management structure had to radically change.

Mr WILKINSON - We have some standard operating procedures. Do you have those?

Mr PAINTER - We do.

Mr WILKINSON - Were they adhered to in 2004?

Mr PAINTER - No they are only recent. Basically it is only in the last two to two-and-a-half years that we have started develop the standard operating procedures.

Mrs JAMIESON - Were they modelled on anybody else's standard operating procedures?

Mr PAINTER - No, not our regulations and compliance with our regulations. We are governed by quite a strict piece of legislation which governed the development of this practice really. Every member of the senior staff at the residences was involved in this development. This is how we do things well, make sure that everyone was involved. So now they are an integral part of the process.

CHAIR - One of the differences between what we have at Ashley and what you do here is that you have one operational manager and another manager who does the other side of things like planning. It is the operational manager who has jurisdiction over those youth workers and social workers, which is interesting.

Mr MARTIN - What were the changes? Can you give us a picture of the before and after 2004? How did the management structure change?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - The current manager at the time, left. So we had a new manger brought on. We increased the practice manager numbers to two because before that we only had one. We increased the supervisors on the floor to one per unit. Before that we had one supervisor for the whole site. So we increased that as well. We increased our casework team and then my job evolved out of that in terms of focusing on risk management. Prior to that I was just part of the casework team. So making someone specialised in that meant that we had a greater focus on assisting the risk right from the beginning before the young person even arrives on site.

CHAIR - So to ask you if you would want somebody new to fill the vacancy at the coalface, if you like in one of the units, what qualifications or training would you expect them to have and over what period, what would you do?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - It would depend on what role they were coming in with. If it was a residential social work role we would be looking for a qualification in social work. So it would be a bachelor or a diploma in social work, that level, and relevant experience obviously. We would put them through quite an interesting process. We have a number of different ways, but one of the ways that we interview in the selection process is where all of the candidates come together for a series of activities. We go through a system of picking out the most suitable candidate.

CHAIR - So you role-play and have written questions?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - It is over a couple of days and it is very interesting to be involved in that process.

Mr PAINTER - Some people present really well and then you put them under pressure within a role-play - and I hate role-plays myself - and it is interesting to see the dynamics that come out of it.

CHAIR - So you might be after one or two people and you have 30 people competing for the same position?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes, usually there are multiple positions available but it is a way of really seeing people at their best and, bearing in mind the nature of a residential environment, you have to be able to show that you can demonstrate a cool, calm head in challenging situations.

CHAIR - So you would not take anybody in who did not have that diploma of social work or would you?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - They would have to be a spectacular candidate at that level.

Mr PAINTER - But we also employ youth workers who are not so qualified, but who have life skills. So you can see some older people on the floor who have life skills.

Mrs JAMIESON - So what training would you give that competent person?

Mr PAINTER - Before they are allowed to work on the floor there is an induction process that they have to go through.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Part of that is observing the work that is done. So they come for a couple of shifts and observe the routines and the type of work that staff are doing, so that if this is not for them, this environment, they can choose then, rather than being employed and finding that it is not. But also for us, we can interact and get a feel as well. But then we have induction programs. So it is over several days and it involves training by experienced staff and practice managers. So there is involvement at senior level and that is a focus on learning the policies and procedures, occupational safety and

health and those types of things. Then there are practical skills - learning about triggers for violence and those sorts of things. It is really hands-on knowledge about what kind of experiences they can come into here and how to manage that.

Then we have a program called NVCI, which is Non-Violent Crisis Intervention and every staff member working out on the floor has to have gone through that program. So the focus on that program is around de-escalating a situation before it becomes violent, but should it become violent, having the skills necessary to intervene. Part of that is learning restraint techniques.

Mr MARTIN - But do the people you are looking for need to move from a custodial focus to focus with young people? What exactly are you looking for?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We are obviously looking for someone who is able to understand the nature of custody. I worked out in the field before coming here for nine years and there is a very different notion of custody out there than what there is in here. Out there I could go around and pick up a teenage boy and take him for icecream and discuss his situation and what his plans were and there was nothing wrong with that. Here, our staff are not alone with the young person in any situation because the nature of custody is quite different. We need people to have their mind set on the fact that a young person has been remanded here. In the Youth Court provision this is the most serious territory that is available to the Youth Court - removing a young person from a community and placing him into an environment such as this. So we need people who are able to get their minds around the fact that these young people are placed in custody.

CHAIR - What percentage of them are on remand here at any one time?

Mr PAINTER - It can be as high as 70 per cent and it can be down to 50 per cent. So there is that fluctuation between those. Nationally they spend about 47 days on remand awaiting a sentence.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Sometimes longer depending on the charges.

Mr PAINTER - If you sitting here on a murder charge, you can wait for a year. You can be incarcerated for a year before you get to trial. On average, 47 days and then if they are sentenced here to a period of supervision residence it is a three-month placement of which they can spend two months here in residence and they get into strife if they commit any further offences while they are here. Then they make it back into the real world, if you like, and they are under supervision of the field social workers for a period of six months. That period may be doubled to six months with either six months or a year's supervision.

Mr WILKINSON - Do you get many coming back?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - I am not 100 per cent sure, but it is reasonably high because I think that is the nature of the young people we are talking about - the top offenders. So it goes hand-in-hand that it is highly likely that we are going to see them back.

Mr WILKINSON - I ask that because with your transition period after they leave custody, there would be some who would say, 'Just leave them to their own devices', which is not

good enough. So there seems to be a real need for this transition. It would seem then, with recidivism, that the transition is not working. I know that some of the clients just continue to come back, time after time.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Some do. There are different levels of young people as well. We also get the young person who has been prolific - say he has done 17 burglaries and 12 car thefts - and the judge has basically said, 'Look, we have tried everything with you and that is enough. It is time you were removed from this community.' So they are on the lesser end in terms of violent crime but they are prolific. Sometimes just being sentenced here is enough and they learn their lesson. I think that basically is the philosophy of how residences were set up and how the act was set up and that is ideally how that should run. But as we were saying before, young people have evolved and their crimes are more serious now. I think it is inevitable that unfortunately there is also, at the other end of the spectrum, those kids that continuously reoffend. So we do the best we can. We are at the mercy of how good the field social worker is who does that transition.

Mr MARTIN - What programs do you have in place to try to make sure they do not come back?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - For our sentenced young people we run one which we call BASOG (?), which is a challenging offending program of 13 modules. It is a quite intensive small group and one-on-one -

Mr MARTIN - It is really structured?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes, very structured and it is designed to map the offending chain. So looking at all the decision-making and everything that went into committing that crime and really challenging that and involving strategies to try to get the young men the skills needed to not go and replicate their crime.

Mr MARTIN - Is there vocational training?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes. For the young people who meet the criteria for vocational training, we have been able to take them off-site and they have worked with mechanics, sign writers, builders and what have you. The criterion they have to meet to be allowed out into the community is that they have worked hard on their program and shown a commitment. Their behaviour would have to be acceptable - they have not been involved in any fighting and so on.

Mr MARTIN - Perhaps some sort of grading system?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes. We have that assessment tool around vocational training. The young boys all have the opportunity to get involved in some form of vocational training - agricultural, working the forklift and what have you. But for our sentenced young people, as long it is in their court plan that the judge knows they may be going off-site for this type of work, it can happen. But many young people do not go off-site unless that is for court or a doctor's appointment.

Mrs JAMIESON - Do you find a good acceptance from employers in the community?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have had very good experiences with that. The young people have received a lot out of it and so have the employers. We had one young person who did so well with a mechanic that he sponsored him into an apprenticeship program and now he does work experience with them while he is working on the program. So that is wonderful.

Mrs JAMIESON - So if an employer has a problem, they come back to you?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes.

Mr PAINTER - We send a staff member. We do not say to the kid, 'Off you go'; the staff member goes with them.

Mrs JAMIESON - Stays for the whole day?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes, stays with them the entire time.

Mr MARTIN - Have you ever had an absconder?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - From that program, no, because anybody we thought that was at risk of doing that would not be going. They have to have proved to themselves during the time with us, either on remand or at the initial stages of their sentence. It is not for every young person. But as for those young people who go with the program, they understand the nature that they are sentenced, that they have a plan and that they have to meet the objectives of the plan. So it is designed for those young people who get their head around all of that and know that this is a privilege.

Mr MARTIN - I was going to say that that is a privilege system -

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We do have incentive system around the young people's compliance and work within the site. It is a points-based system and each individual team manages that.

Mr MARTIN - Is it assessed on a weekly basis?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Every three weeks the team has what we call an office day and during the office day they will plan the next three shifts.

Mr PAINTER - We are currently looking nationally at all the behavioural incentive schemes to try to get some uniformity and consistency with the schemes. We are trying to look at how we have a scheme or a system that provides a more balanced approach.

CHAIR - Following on from that. Is there any formal complaints procedure either coming up through the staff and/or the residents? If an incident takes place, how is it dealt with and what happens there?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Our legislation provides for the provision of a grievance panel and within that grievance system. So the young people do not have to go through staff, all they have to do is request a grievance form and it is numbered and it is tracked and they

are entitled to that form. It is not up to our staff to vet that in any way. It is entirely a process between the young person and at this stage it is managed by the managers involved.

CHAIR - At the management level?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes. So the young person fills out the form. There is a mailbox that it goes into and it is sent to the manager. The manager then can have a look at the nature of the concern and will take the appropriate steps.

CHAIR - So is that going through to the mega poo bah, manager or business manager?

Ms PAINTER - That goes to the manager at the top.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - With some investigations - things like looking for clothing that someone alleges one of the young people stole and walked out with when they went to court - at that level the manager might say to the supervisor, 'You can look into that and find out whether that young person left the site with that sweat shirt on and come back to me and tell me and make some recommendations.' Some investigations can be delegated out to that level. The ones that are serious - alleged misconduct between and staff - are dealt with through the manager and the HR process.

CHAIR - Do you find that works well, that process?

Mr PAINTER - It is time-consuming. The kids can complain that the food was cold, that the wind blew up. So it is time-consuming but it is reasonably robust in that the grievance program was made up of a selection of community members, external to the organisation. Currently we just had two new appointments here. I think one was a lawyer and two other members of the community. So they come in and every two or three weeks they review the grievance process. If the young person goes through the process and is not satisfied with the outcome then they can appeal to the grievance panel and the grievance panel can say, 'Yes, it was fair' or 'No, it was not fair.'

Mrs JAMIESON - So you would address the finding with the young person and say, 'Look mate, do you think you are being unreasonable about this?'

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Because the panel underpin it, they can have a look at it perhaps from a different point of view and they can make recommendations. So they can say, 'We sat down with this young person and we heard such and such. We recommend that you reverse your decision.' So that could be the impact of it as well.

Mr WILKINSON - Is that binding?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes.

Mr WILKINSON - So if the grievance panel came back and said that this person was dealt with a bit harshly -

Mr PAINTER - Each quarter each resident produces a grievance report that goes to a national coordinator in Wellington. She gathers all the reports together and then she

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sends it out to the major stakeholders. The Youth Court judge gets a copy, the Commissioner for Children gets a copy, the CEO of our organisation gets a copy and so they can see at that level what is going on within the residence system. Trust me, if they find things they do not like, they let us know.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - I think the nature of these is around recognising that although these are young offenders, at the end of the day they are youth and they are not adults. So making those processes quite transparent and open benefits their protection. The whole residential care regulations are set up with that philosophy - that these are young people who have rights that must be adhered to, looked after and promoted. So everything at residences is regulated. Even in opening mail, breakfast routines, there is a regulation and everything is logged in a book and audited by independent people. They then come in and they look at our books and if we searched a young person, there is regulation that tells us the grounds that we can do that and level that we can go to, who gives the approval and all of that is regulated and the log book must reflect that we have met that regulation. So we have to be very open and transparent about the types of things that we are doing with the young people.

Mrs JAMIESON - Do you find your legislation works well for you? It is not one of these onerous legislations?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - I think it does on some levels. But I think what it has not evolved with is the nature of the young people that we are now dealing with in the level of violence that we could now encounter.

Mr PAINTER - The legislation was good at the time it was established but it has not evolved since and some of the constraints that we have here are difficult. For example, we cannot lock the kids in their rooms.

CHAIR - You cannot? Can you close the door at night-time?

Mr PAINTER - Yes, but they can let themselves out every night. So that is a major issue for us, as you can imagine. We can lock down secure, like a jail, if you like, but there are actual residential areas we cannot lock down. So they go to bed at night and we close the door.

CHAIR - There is a review being done at the moment, isn't there?

Mr PAINTER - There is and I am hoping that the minister will take it to Parliament and impress on them that this needs to be changed.

Mr MARTIN - So it must cause a lot of problems at night then?

Mr PAINTER - At times it can cause some issues.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - The door is locked from this side so that other young people cannot go into the other young person's room, but -

(Break in tape)

CHAIR - ... to try to keep them away from the 17 year old? So they are all together?

Mr PAINTER - It is really a balancing act to work out which side they can go. We look at the gang issues, co-offenders, relatives, all those things. It just really is a balancing act here.

CHAIR - So you do have some girls in here at some stage or not at all?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - No.

CHAIR - So where do they go?

Mr PAINTER - North or south - either Auckland or Christchurch.

CHAIR - In a totally separate unit? They totally separated -

Mr PAINTER - No, there are actually boys there.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - But they have the ability to manage things better because if they had enough girls they could choose to run a girls unit if they wanted to. Whereas here, we might have had one young woman and 29 boys and that was a nightmare for that young woman. For example, showering was a vulnerable time for that young woman with all those boys and the pressure is huge. It just was not ideal. The other residences had that ability to be flexible. Maybe it was just putting them down in a different wing; if you were to put all girls down a wing, that is a lot easier.

This is the site. We are essentially here and this is what Mark is talking about, this main courtyard area and you can see, it is all enclosed by a walkway. This is the main area, divided into two units. This is where the young people sleep.

This is our school area, the classroom. There are two classrooms here and we utilise our cultural centre as a huge classroom because that way, rather than having two groups of 15 in school, we can break it down to three groups of 10.

Mr MARTIN - So the cultural centre is indigenous?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - It is a centre that allows us to observe potential cultural events, such as a Maori welcome. We would utilise this area, moving in through the carved entrance way to the cultural centre where we are able to share food and whatever. So it is big enough to be able to hold particular events. We utilise this during the day as the third classroom. The school people are not employees of our organisation. That is an external contract and it is run by teachers. They have a principal based in Wellington and the team leader here on the site and then there are six teachers.

They have what we call an individual Q-plan (?) for every young person on the site and they formulate them through seven days. The school has an assistant teacher and she lets us know what the literacy and numeracy needs are. That is built into their Q-plans and that is another way of sharing information.

Mr PAINTER - We have a nurse on site five days a week and a doctor comes for one hour every week.

Mrs JAMIESON - And that nurse would manage any medical condition, such as epilepsy or diabetes?

Mr PAINTER - Yes. She manages and dishes out the medication.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We also have a pool on site. During the day, during school hours, it is part of the physical education program. In the evenings they have programs designed around recreation and they utilise it then.

Mrs JAMIESON - Are there TV privileges?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have one television set in each unit. It would be used specifically and only if the supervisor felt it was right at the time. The young people have 'passive recreation' at night time. That might involve writing letters or playing card games or whatever. There is some time for telly, but not all the time.

Mr MARTIN - What sort of programs do they watch?

Mr PAINTER - The programs are PG-rated. Anything above that level is not acceptable unless the manager has seen it and has decreed that there is something of educational value in the program. Then the manager has the authority to sign off.

Mr MARTIN - So that would have to be signed off by the manager?

Mr PAINTER - Yes. I am not saying staff occasionally don't slip one in because that would be naïve. If they do, they go through a formal process and staff get held to account if they are silly enough to do that. Those kids will talk about it - 'Guess what so and so has watched?'

Mrs JAMIESON - And generally staff accept the zero tolerance anyway.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - They all know that is what is required.

Mrs JAMIESON - What about the use of mentors and volunteers coming into the service unit?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We have touched on it from time to time it is an area where we are still developing relationships. I think there is some difficulty around the fact that a lot of our young people aren't from this area so any long-term benefit from that is hard to assess. There is an organisation that is getting itself going at the moment in our community called Youth Transitions and they are looking at taking on a mentoring role. So at the moment we only have a couple of boys from Palmerston North here but we are looking at putting them into a school eventually and building a relationship and they are looking at mentoring.

We have talked from time to time about mentors from the YMCA and places like that too.

Mrs JAMIESON - What about, say, Rotary Clubs or some other group like that that might like to take this as a project?

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Yes.

Mrs JAMIESON - Or even assisting maybe in the classroom for example, because literacy is a problem presumably?

Mr PAINTER - There are literacy issues amongst the kids, yes.

Mrs JAMIESON - I am thinking of a one-to-one person helping young kids to brush themselves up.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - Well, at the moment I think the school would manage that within their teaching resources rather than having volunteers come in like that.

We have to be very careful about privacy and confidentiality.

Mrs JAMIESON - Yes, of course.

Ms BREW-HARTLEY - We had a young person from Bangladesh and we were really keen to link him culturally so that we could help him to do some of their customs and things like that but when we contacted the local Bangladesh society without giving names or details or anything they said if he had shamed their people they would come in there but they would teach him a lesson. We couldn't have that. So we weren't able to access a community resource for that young person. So you have to be really careful about their confidentiality and their privacy around issues such as that because there is a lot of misconception about the young people who we have here and we are viewed as a prison. We have to be very careful about the way we promote ourselves in the community.

Mrs JAMIESON - So how much does it cost to run the unit, do you know?

Mr PAINTER - This residence costs just over \$6 million.

CHAIR - In terms of staff do you have much stress leave or sick leave? Is there an over-abundance of that sort of thing or is it reasonably under control?

Mr PAINTER - It is always an issue in these sorts of environments and so we are taking a more active role in managing sick leave. The current agreement we have with the predominant union here, the PSA, says they have unlimited sick leave. It doesn't say currently unlimited paid sick leave, so we are working through with the union at the moment about how we will deal with that.

CHAIR - What is the predominant union?

Mr PAINTER - PSA is the union.

CHAIR - Public Service Association?

Mr PAINTER - Yes.

CHAIR - Okay.

DISCUSSION CONCLUDED.