

unlikely to die in the near future; up to about a hundred could still be in hospital in 10 years' time, in the absence of any alternative provision.

It is still official policy to work towards the eventual closure of the large separate mental hospitals (Department of Health and Social Security, 1971), although it is now recognized that this will not be feasible in the very near future. The DHSS memorandum "Services for mental illness related to old age" (DHSS, 1972) deals with patients who have grown old in mental hospitals as a special group. Regular re-assessment is essential for these patients, and 'care should be taken to transfer patients, wherever possible, with the staff to whom they are accustomed and to an environment similar to that which they have left'. The question becomes one of providing appropriate and adequate alternatives for both elderly chronic patients and those who are not yet old but have been in hospital for many years.

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#### CORRECTION

In the August issue of the journal, the authors of the paper on p.168, 'New Haven Survey of Joint Diseases XVI. Impairment, Disability, and Arthritis', are Roy M. Acheson, Jennifer L. Kelsey, and Gerald N. Ginsburg.