CHAPTER 11

RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR THE
CHRONICALLY MENTALLY ILL

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At its best community residential care for the chronically mentally ill provides both sheltered housing and a sustained rehabilitative orientation. This requires careful individual program planning to help the resident grow both within and outside the residence. The entire program is organized with the recognition that it plays a central role in facilitating the resident's development at different psychological, psychosocial and behavioral levels. It encourages individual psychological growth; it fosters socialization by creating an internal social system within the residential milieu; and it enables the resident to play meaningful roles in a variety of external systems—vocational, family, avocational and others. Thus, the community residence not only provides a potentially rich inner life, but it also interacts with an entire spectrum of services outside of its immediate confines which are vital to the successful rehabilitation of the resident. Although this network of community treatment is generally conceived of solely in medical terms, the entire program can in fact be considered to be the fulfillment of normal family function. Thus, as in the normal family, the program insures maturation, socialization, education and vocational preparation for its member (Budson 1978a).

The accompanying figure represents a schematic depiction of the various components of the community residence program. The reader can readily grasp the multifarious system into which the resident enters. Many of the modalities which a resident will encounter

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Figure 1. The Community Residence Program. Reprinted from R. D. Budson, The Psychiatric Halfway House: A Handbook of Theory and Practice, by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press. Copyright © 1978 by University of Pittsburgh Press.