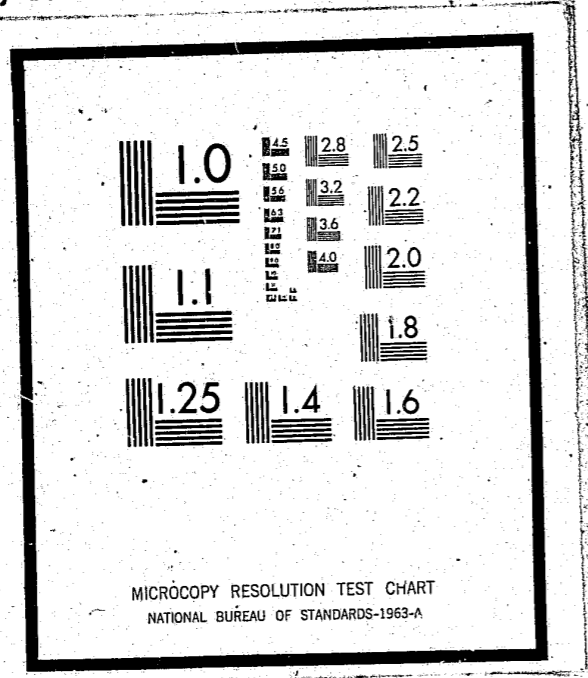


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VOCARE

Five-Month Interim Evaluation of-

VOCARE

for

Alameda County

by

Office of Criminal Justice Planning  
Alameda Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board  
100 Webster Street, Suite 104  
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April 1, 1974

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I INTRODUCTION

## I INTRODUCTION

Vocare was established in April 1972 to provide a readjustment facility and guidance counseling program within the community for women ex-offenders who have been released from primarily three institutions: California Institution for Women, California Rehabilitation Facility, and Santa Rita. They have recently initiated liaison work with the courts so that they are now accepting women who have been released on their own recognizance. In addition, contracts are currently being negotiated to expand the program to include women who have been paroled or put on probation from outside Alameda County.

In September 1973, Vocare negotiated a contract with Alameda County to receive \$80,000 in revenue sharing funds to implement their extant program and to expand and improve services provided. The program receives additional funds from welfare programs such as Aid to the Totally Disabled (ATD) and General Assistance (GA), grants from private foundations and individual donations.

In December 1973, the County of Alameda contracted with the Regional Criminal Justice Planning Board to conduct an evaluation of those components of Vocare which would be receiving revenue sharing funds. It was agreed that such evaluation would:

1. Determine if contracted services were being performed.
2. Investigate the findings of limited sampling and analysis of pertinent records with the goals of evaluating to what extent project goals are being achieved.
3. Recommend any improvements in effectiveness of program operation and modify evaluation methods as needed.
4. Advise the County Administrator of any unusual conditions which might pose operational problems to the project.

This report represents the five-month interim report for the evaluation of Vocare and fulfills the obligation to perform Task 1 as agreed to in our proposal (Evaluation of Four Revenue Sharing Programs).

II PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

## II PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

### A. Description of Contracted Services

Vocare was funded by Alameda County to assist ex-offenders in their efforts to find housing, employment, and personal counseling following release from county jails, state prisons, and federal institutions. The program provides a 24-hour residence with meals, supportive counseling, job development and placement, group and individual therapy, and medical supervision. Residents are referred for immediate job training or employment, enrollment in educational institutions, or involvement in volunteer work for charitable organizations.

Vocare is unique in that it is the only halfway house in the entire Bay Area for female ex-offenders. The program addresses a vast and largely unmet need in providing a vital link between the prison and the community by recognizing the problems of the newly released or convicted offender such as lack of employment or any other source of income, inadequate educational experience, poor job qualifications, broken family ties and membership in discriminated minority groups.

Without the benefit of such a resource, a woman may be released from prison with a miniscule amount of money, hardly any personal belongings, no place to stay except the YWCA, and the necessity for immediate and continued accountability to a probation or parole agent. The training received in prison compounds the problem since most of the skills acquired cannot be profitably transferred to work in the community at large. In addition to such tangible handicaps, the woman newly released from a penal institution suffers from the considerable social stigma attached to being considered an "ex-con" which usually results in feelings of alienation, frustration, and hopelessness.

Vocare's attempt to create a successful readjustment facility and guidance counseling program within the Oakland community is governed by a pragmatic rather than a theoretical approach; their motto might be "think realistically". Within this framework, commitment to employment opportunities remains a top priority, followed by involvement in a vocational and/or educational training program.

The core of this readjustment facility and guidance center is the halfway house located at 2849 Delaware Street, Oakland, California, which opened on March 31, 1972. Located near public transportation and places of public and private employment, it is a large, two-story residence which previously served as a convalescent home. Fire permit and zoning variance of the previous occupant have been continued without difficulty. The neighborhood is a well-maintained residential area with a low rate of crime and delinquency. The initial skeptical reactions of the neighborhood have been appeased by public relations efforts by the staff and residents together with reassurances from the Police Department.

1. Referral Sources

Clients eligible for revenue sharing funds are ex-offenders who have been committed to prison or jail from Alameda County under their last convictions, or who are referred from the Alameda County courts as a condition of probation. Judges of the municipal courts have shown continued support of the project since its inception; Vocare has specific arrangements with four judges in Alameda County to assign women with felony charges to the facility for observation and for short training periods in lieu of incarceration.

Vocare has instituted several different programs to insure appropriate referrals. One of these is termed "Reentry", which means that, rather than be returned to prison as a result of a probation or parole violation, a woman will be reinstated by the Board of Terms and Parole and brought to the halfway house where a specific program will be designed for her in order to help her deal with the problems which resulted in her initial involvement with criminal justice agencies.

Another component of Vocare's program is entitled "Alternative to Prison" which is geared toward women convicted of felonies for the first time. In the early stages of her legal hearings, the judge may sentence a woman to state prison for a 90-day evaluation period or release her to Vocare's custody for a similar evaluation. The judge then has the option of committing the woman to state prison or returning her to the



community under the supervision of a community program such as Vocare. If the latter option is chosen, the woman becomes a probationer of the County rather than a State parolee and is subject to the terms of her probation, such as steady employment, participation in therapy groups, vocational training arrangements, etc. Her participation in Vocare is designed to fulfill such stipulations and a specific program is designed to this end. Although women released under these conditions experience programs similar to those of other Vocare residents, some aspects are slightly different: required length of stay is slightly longer (from three to six months) and monies for such women come from General Assistance, Vocational Rehabilitation, and employment, exclusively.

Referrals to Vocare are also obtained through contacts initiated by the program director with the institutions listed previously. Women who have expressed a desire to find out more about Vocare while still incarcerated are interviewed in order to determine their suitability for participation in the program.

Vocare's revenue sharing contract was amended to include as potential residents those women who have been referred directly from the courts as a condition of release on their own recognizance, should the judge decide on this option.<sup>1</sup> This insures 24-hour supervision of the woman, without necessitating that she experience confinement in a penal institution. In addition, Vocare is responsible for making sure that the woman is present for all scheduled court appearances and for submitting required progress reports to the court. Program staff hope that such O.R. clients will continue to be assigned to Vocare after their court appearances in lieu of being sentenced to prison time. Once again, such clients must abide by the particular conditions of their probation.

Communication of information to the probation or parole officer is initiated by means of a pre-application form which

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<sup>1</sup>Amendment to Revenue Sharing Contract dated December 4, 1973.

is completed by Vocare staff subsequent to receiving a referral from the Probation Department or Parole Office. A copy of this pre-screening form is found in Appendix I. Such referrals are usually telephoned to the facility and followed by a visit. Probation or parole supervision of clients is accomplished by several methods: probation officers make regular visits to the facility which may or may not involve some sort of testing; the resident is taken to the probation officer's office by Vocare staff; or information is exchanged via telephone calls. The appropriate officer is notified immediately if his client leaves the program without sanction and decisions about termination are arrived at by consultation between probation officers, Vocare staff, and the residents themselves. Residents are allowed to initiate contact with their probation officers on their own if they so desire.

## 2. Admission Criteria

Basic criteria for acceptance into Vocare are that a woman be at least 17 years of age, have no record of violence or difficulties with peer group relationships during incarceration, have no record of escapes from prison, have no pattern of continued parole violations, and that they are ambulatory.

Since Vocare does not have any facilities for detoxification of active drug addicts, such clients are ordinarily rejected, or at least have to be detoxified and have demonstrated a period of being clean on the streets prior to admittance. However, many of the residents have had some recent drug experience, thus posing some difficulties in terms of supervision to prevent contraband drug traffic and illicit drug use, particularly in the evening hours. Restricting their client population to non-addicts enables Vocare to employ less rigid supervisory rules and regulations. The staff has expressed its willingness to accept drug abusers other than hard-core addicts provided an additional staff member is employed to help deal with the previously mentioned problems.

## 3. Program Operation

Upon acceptance and arrival into the program, the new resident is oriented by the program director as to the house rules

and other relevant program policies and procedures. A general plan designed to meet mutually agreed upon goals is developed including appropriate referrals such as to medical and dental facilities. She is then referred to the administrative director who, functioning as a job developer, develops an individualized program geared to specific needs of the client. The main goal of this job development plan is to facilitate re-entry into the community and to secure a stable source of income as expeditiously as possible. At this point, the individual may be referred to several appropriate County agencies such as Welfare, Vocational Rehabilitation, Human Resources Development, community colleges or others. The action plan which results from such consultation is established so that, if a new resident does not become employed or involved in school immediately, she still be required to do volunteer work for various community agencies so that her time will be spent occupied in some meaningful activity.

At the time of acceptance, the woman's financial situation will be appraised and appropriate steps taken to place her on General Assistance or on other Welfare programming should she have no source of income. Residents covered by such Welfare programs as Aid to the Totally Disabled (ATD) and Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) are expected to pay \$15 a week for their room and board. On the other hand, Vocare residents are also eligible to receive \$25 which they donate to the program from the General Assistance Fund sponsored by the Department of Corrections. Residents who are employed by outside agencies are asked to contribute \$22.50/week to cover their living expenses.

In addition to this type of assistance, the residents at Vocare are exposed to many different types of counseling. Program staff feel its most effective therapeutic tool is "peer pressure" formally exercised through a weekly house meeting and small groups designed to deal with particular problems which may arise.

An individual may also have one-to-one counseling if appropriate. New clients are encouraged to take their problems to a staff member or to another resident in order to maintain their conditional release status as a program

participant. More intensive psychiatric care is available through community mental health clinics and psychiatric consultants.

Material provided by the program includes several different categories of house rules to be followed by residents. Such topics include curfews, the use of alcohol and drugs, visitors, attendance at therapy groups and others. The staff is in the process of revising these rules and regulations so that they allow for more stringent control over residents' activities since the program's population comprises an increasingly greater percentage of women with drug problems. If the resident violates any of the house rules by which Vocare operates, this is handled in a group setting by her peers. Should a second serious violation of rules occur, it may be necessary to contact the probation or parole officer to make the agent aware of such problems. The probation and parole officers who assign residents at Vocare are encouraged to make visits to the facility and to undertake whatever type of testing is necessary for supervisory purposes. Detailed client records and progress reports have been kept on file and are available to appropriate investigators, and the present staff expressed the intention of maintaining and updating such record keeping.

The average stay for a Vocare resident is normally from four to five months, with a minimum of three months. As soon as she demonstrates adequate evidence of stability, such as stable employment history, the resident will be assisted in finding her own living quarters and be placed on an out-patient basis for group counseling. The approach employed by Vocare emphasizes the importance of continued contact with the project and encourages the newly discharged resident to attend a weekly therapy group. Vocare's doors are always open to ex-residents confronting difficult situations in the community.

If, however, the resident leaves without permission or program sanction, Vocare staff assumes the responsibility of contacting the probation or parole officer at this time in order to transfer responsibility for action to the supervising agency.

Vocare had previously expended efforts to become self-supporting via the establishment of small businesses such as a thrift shop, beauty salon, or other such operations. This was intended to provide residents with the opportunity to achieve job training and experience helpful in future job applications in addition to securing their own source of income. However, such program aspects have been temporarily suspended because of the recent changes in administration and the other pressing financial difficulties the program is currently confronting.

B. Administration

Vocare operates as a nonprofit corporation under a Board of Directors which meets bi-monthly at 4:30 p.m. Thursday at the facility. There are four officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary. The officers are elected by a majority vote of the Board membership at an annual meeting. Current by-laws specify that the Chairperson shall serve for a period of five years and the other three officers for a period of one year each. However, the Board is in the process of amending these by-laws so it is anticipated that the terms of office, particularly for the Chairperson, will be modified.

The Board is currently composed of eight women and two men whose outside involvements are of a professional and para-professional nature, ranging from working in fields such as education, county administration, teaching, and probation. (See Appendix II for a list of Board members and their affiliations.)

The Board is subdivided into three standing committees: an Executive Committee, a Finance Committee, and a Personnel Committee. Each of these is composed of three members who have volunteered to serve for an indeterminate period. The Executive Committee is responsible for planning for recruitment and training of Board members, supervising Board activities, and participating in any important procedural and policy decisions. The Finance Committee takes care of all monetary matters such as approving budget and salary allocations, initiating funding requests from official agencies, planning fund-raising activities, generally supervising program expenditures. The Personnel Committee is in charge of recruiting, interviewing, hiring, and supervising the program and administrative directors who super-

wise the night and relief counselors. Additional committees may be designated on a temporary basis to handle specific assignments should this be appropriate.

C. Personnel

Vocare's staff presently consists of four women: an Administrative Director, a Program Director, a Relief Counselor and a Night Counselor. The Relief and Night Counselors have been employed by Vocare since September 20, 1973, and had formerly been clients of the program. The Administrative and Program Directors have both been employed since January 31, 1974.

Each of these staff members have signed a comprehensive contract, according to revenue sharing stipulations, with the Board of Directors which meets the qualifications, functions, salaries, and conditions of employment. The Administrative Director is responsible for writing grants, negotiating contracts, job development and placement, and community relations efforts. She represents Vocare in giving talks, issuing press releases, conducting media interviews, participating with other agencies in cooperative endeavors, and providing consultative services to such agencies upon request. Such community relations efforts serve many purposes: they facilitate fund-raising activities, promote the recruitment of volunteer assistance, and serve a preventive function insofar as student populations are educated about the realities of involvement in criminal activities and the consequent penalties. The Program Director has chief responsibility for management of the facility including supervision of program regulations and daily routines. She also recruits and screens new residents and attends court appearances with them. The Night Counselor has responsibility for the house from the hours of 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. five nights a week and leads a small group. The Relief Counselor is responsible for the operation of the house and supervising the behavior of the residents from Friday night until Sunday night every weekend.

Additional information pertaining to staff accountability, qualifications, and functions is outlined in the chart on the following page.

In addition to the four paid staff members, Vocare has contracted with a bookkeeper who works with the program on a part-time

STAFFING STRUCTURE

<u>Position</u>	<u>Accountability</u>	<u>Qualifications &amp; Experience</u>	<u>Functions</u>
Administrative Director	In matters involving intra-staff and/or staff-resident disputes, accountable to Board Personnel Liaison appointed by Board. In matters involving psychological problems with residents, shall report to consulting psychiatrist.	Grantsmanship; administrative ability to deal with women and ex-convicts; supervise staff and house; set policy; job development and placement; experience teaching school, degree in musicology.	Write grant proposals; negotiate contracts; plan and implement budget with bookkeeper; perform public relations function; maintain statistical records and do billing; job development and placement.
Program Director	Same as above except in cases when consulting psychiatrist and Personnel Liaison is not available, shall report to Administrative Director.	Experience with ex-convicts; formerly project director; experience in counseling and drug counseling; knowledge of drugs; interviewing techniques.	Supervise programs, regulations, daily routines; keep personal records of clients; counsel residents; attend court appearances; work with probation officers; recruit and screen new residents and volunteers; have chief responsibility for house; initiate and implement special programs.
Night Counselor	Accountable to Program Director	Experience in counseling, detecting and dealing with drug abuse, and group therapy sessions; formerly an ex-offender.	Responsible for operation of house from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. five nights/week; checking of curfews and writing reports; settling disputes; leading small group and counseling residents.
Relief Counselor	Accountable to Administrative Director	Same as Night Counselor	Responsible for operation of house from Thursday until Sunday night every weekend.
Bookkeeper	Accountable to Board of Directors	Public Accountant; extensive experience in dealing with OEIDC, County, and municipally funded programs.	Maintains books and records of fiscal matters.

basis to keep recording of fiscal matters up-to-date and is accountable for inspection. The bookkeeper is responsible to the Board of Directors.

The Administrative Director has been successful in recruiting two volunteers who are working with the project in addition to paid staff. These women are interested community people involved with the Livermore Presbyterian Church. They provide valuable assistance by performing general duties such as accompanying residents to Welfare and other necessary appointments, assisting in general office duties, and running errands, thus freeing staff time for more essential functions.

D. Training

Permanent positions are currently filled by women possessing full qualifications and experience. Vocare has no formal training for paid staff or volunteers at present but staff had expressed intentions to reinstate case conference meetings for purposes of staff consultation and mutual exchange of information regarding programmatic issues.

E. Technical Affairs

The appointed liaison between Vocare and the County was a probation officer who had been involved with the program since July 1973. He had attended all Board meetings as a consultant and was primarily concerned with the following areas: (1) insuring compliance with stipulations of the County revenue sharing contract; (2) assisting in developing a comprehensive casework system including the devising of forms for recording intake data and screening procedures; and (3) reviewing accountability of fiscal policies. He was well informed about current operating procedures and kept a comprehensive informational file on the program.

However, the previous liaison officer no longer fills this position. He has been replaced by the Revenue Sharing Coordinator for the Alameda County Human Resources Agency who is in the process of becoming oriented to the responsibilities of this office.



III PROJECT PERFORMANCE

### III PROJECT PERFORMANCE

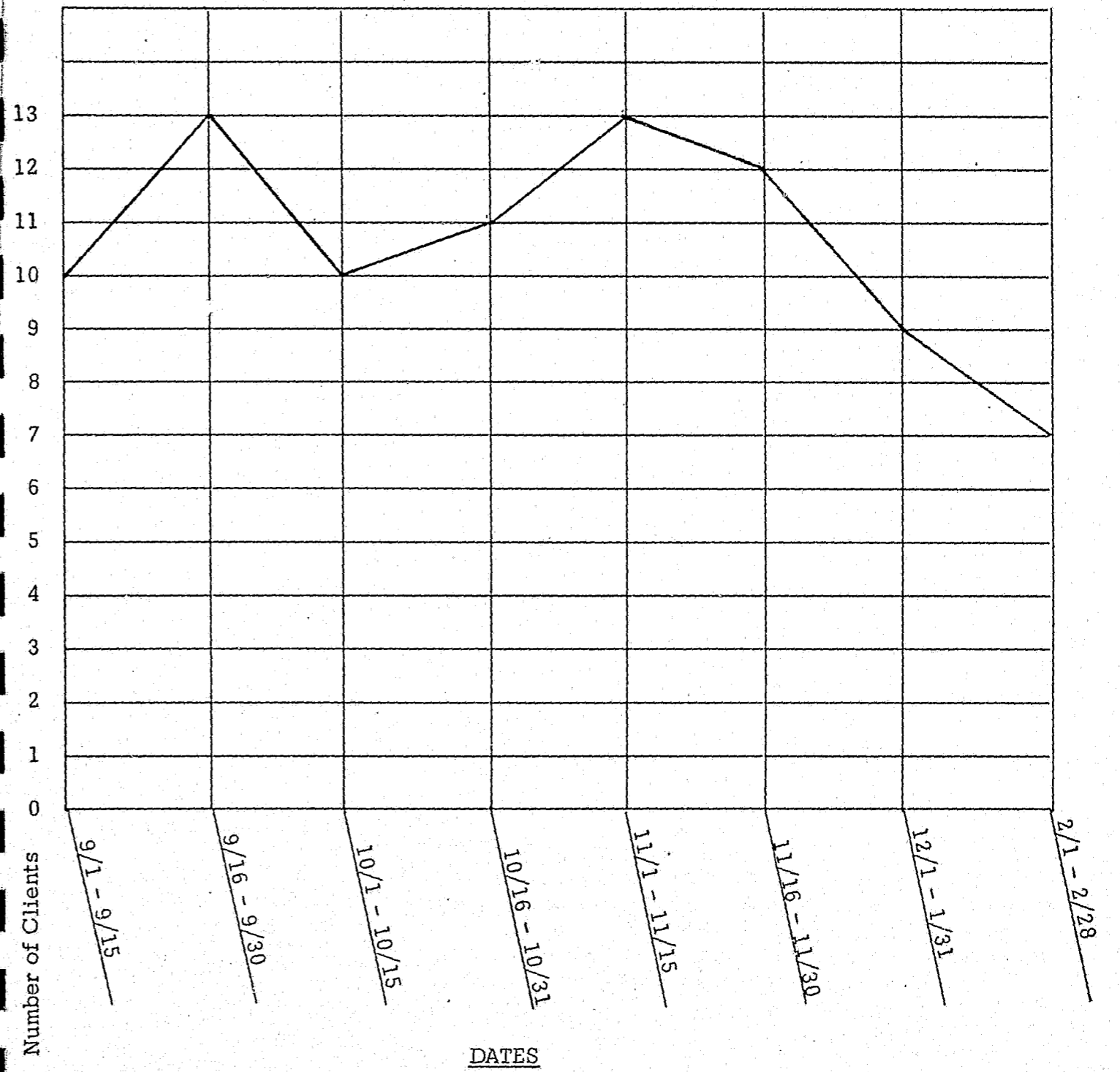
Prior to presenting any information for the purpose of evaluating Vocare's performance in terms of contracted services, it is important to note the administrative changes which have recently occurred in the program. Subsequent to being awarded their revenue sharing grant, County and Federal agencies conducted several investigations into the administrative and programmatic policies characteristic of Vocare at that time, with the conclusion that several modifications in program design were imperative in order to ameliorate referral, therapeutic, and fiscal difficulties. Much of the problem appeared to focus on the authoritarian, independent posture adopted by the previous executive director, particularly her reluctance to utilize feedback about the disposition of clients from their supervising probation or parole officer. The previous executive director resigned in January 1974 and the responsibilities of her position were divided so that two administrative positions were created; an Administrative Director and a Program Director who were hired at the end of January. This change in administration resulted in the turnover of other staff and the discharge of several clients so that client population dropped from twelve in November to eight in February as illustrated by Figure 1 entitled, Number of Clients in Program for Period of September, 1973, to February, 1974, shown on the following page.

This splitting of the previous executive director's position into two positions was an attempt by the concerned County agencies, particularly the Probation Department and Vocare's Board of Directors, to distinguish the locus of authority over administrative responsibilities, including those areas related to job development and placement from that concerned with internal programmatic issues such as recruitment and screening of referrals and therapeutic modalities.

The newly appointed staff expressed the intention of continuing previously established program procedures and policies with the addition of modifications designed to enhance the effectiveness of the program. Although they were very helpful to the evaluator in providing access to all files and the material contained within them, the abrupt departure of the previous executive director precluded an adequate orientation for new staff. They had little idea of what measurement criteria or data had been collected previously. The evaluator attempted to contact the previous director with no response. Thus, the evaluation was hampered by this recent change in administration.

Figure 1

Number of Clients in Program for Period of September, 1973, to February, 1974



Keeping such considerations in mind, Vocare's activities will be discussed under categories describing contractual services, namely, Rehabilitative and Vocational Services, Counseling Services, and Probation and Parole Conditions.

A. Rehabilitative and Vocational Services

Vocare's revenue sharing contract specifies that the program will provide food and lodging for a maximum of 20 referrals who will be exposed to development and implementation of job placement and training programs. The latter includes an initial evaluation of referral needs, development of a written plan to identify vocational and educational goals and periodic implementation and evaluation of implementation of such goals.

Evidence of formal documentation of such processes were not available to the evaluator; the Administrative Director stated that programs for vocational placement and vocational and educational training programs were devised informally through consultation with the new resident on an individual basis.

In assessing the program's activities in vocational services, the evaluator was provided with statistics covering the period of September 1, 1973, through February 28, 1974, which indicated clients' names, their birthdates, the referral sources, whether they were working, doing volunteer work, or receiving welfare. This information also included the number of weeks spent in Vocare, whether the client was active, released, or escaped, the number of days spent in the program during the particular time period under consideration. This data is compiled for 15-day periods from September 1 to November 30, 1973. The data describing the period of December 1, 1973, to January 31, 1974, is combined due to reporting problems. Figures for February include the whole month. Thus, material is summarized in Figure 2 entitled, Distribution of Active Caseload, shown on the following page.

A further breakdown of the data shown in Figure 2 indicates that the average number of clients residing at Vocare during a 15-day period during the months of September to January is approximately eleven. The fact that this figure is less than their 20-client maximum capacity may be reflective of the hesitance of probation and parole officers to make referrals to the program because of

Figure 2

Distribution of Active Caseload

Month	Number of Clients	Number only Working*	Number only Involved in Vocational & Educational Training	Number Involved in Both Working & Training	Other (Welfare Volunteer)
Sept. 1-15, 1973	10	9 (90%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (10%)
Sept. 15-30	13	7 (54%)	1 (8%)	2 (15%)	3 (23%)
Oct. 1-15	12	6 (50%)	0 (0%)	2 (17%)	4 (33%)
Oct. 16-31	11	5 (45%)	0 (0%)	2 (18%)	4 (37%)
Nov. 1-15	13	5 (38%)	2 (15.5%)	2 (15.5%)	4 (31%)
Nov. 16-30	12	6 (43%)	0 (0%)	3 (21%)	3 (25%)
Dec. 1-Jan. 31**	9	6 (67%)	1 (11%)	2 (22%)	0 (0%)
Feb. 1-28	8	6 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Totals	88	50 (56.8%)	4 (5%)	13 (15%)	21 (26%)

\*Categories of number of clients only working or only involved in vocational and educational training are mutually exclusive.

\*\*Prior to 12/1/73, the program submitted bi-monthly statistical reports to the County Liaison regarding distribution of active caseload in terms of the categories shown above. Subsequent to this date, management of the program suffered from the confusion resulting from unstable administrative policy. They did not continue their bi-monthly reporting pattern, but presented data describing the two months of December and January cumulatively. The new administration submitted figures for February on a monthly basis.

difficulties in administration it was experiencing at this time. This is further indicated by Figure 3 entitled, Distribution of Referral Sources to Vocare for Period of September 1, 1973, to February 28, 1974, shown on the following page.

Of the total of 80 clients who were involved in Vocare, the average percent of them employed was approximately 59.3% and the weighted average of those clients involved in vocational and/or educational training was 6.8%. Approximately 17.5% of the clients were involved in both employment and training, leaving 14.9% who were receiving welfare and/or doing volunteer work.

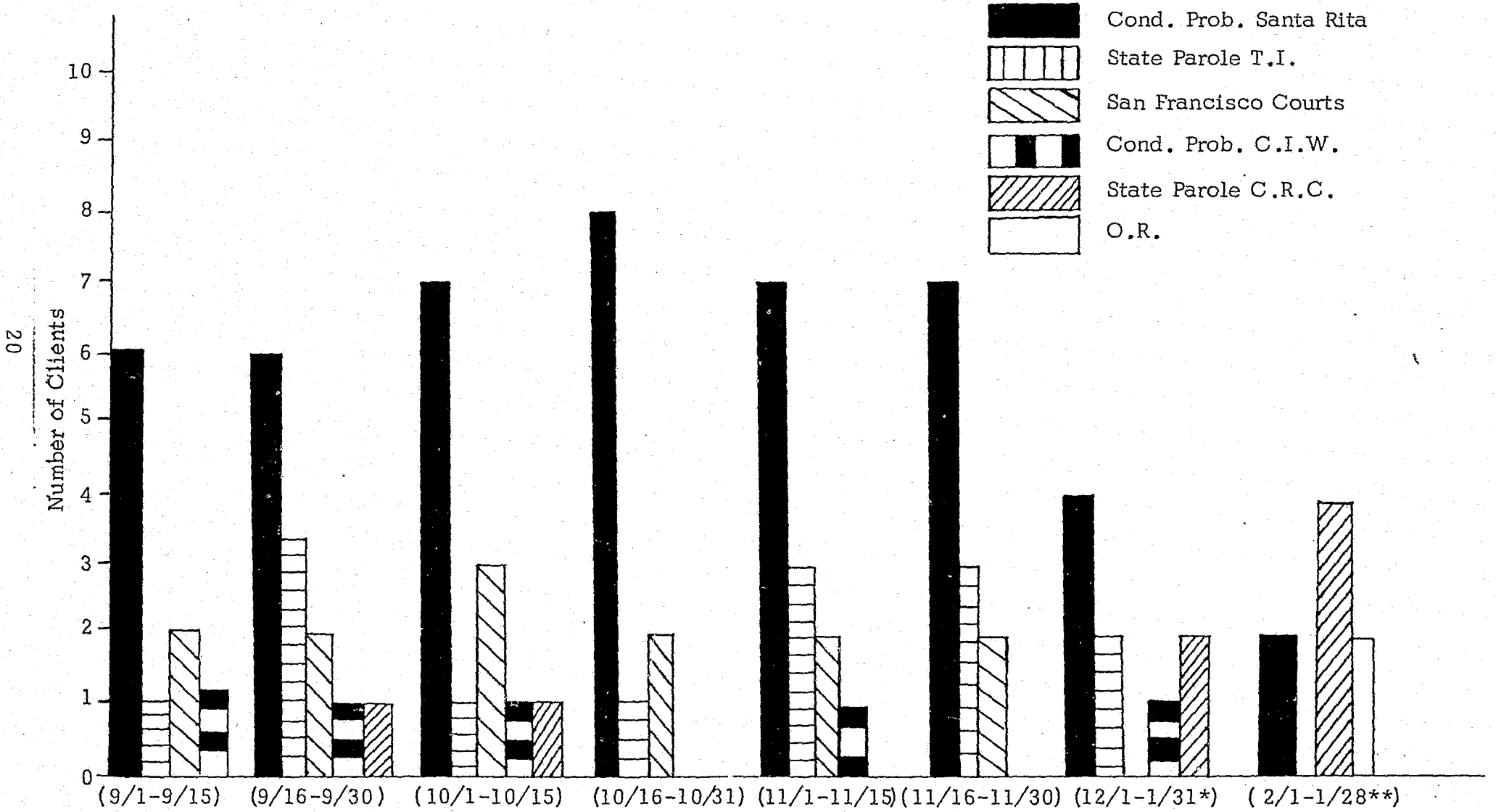
In view of the high priorities placed on employment and vocational and educational training, data indicates favorable results of the program's efforts, combining the figures, approximately 76.3% of the clients were involved in either of these latter two categories during any 15-day period. This represents over three-quarters of their entire client population.

The written material provided the evaluator did not, however, include any description of the types of jobs held, the length of employment in any specific job, the salaries received, the therapeutic impact of the job, and did not include the feelings of the residents regarding their employment. However, discussions with program staff revealed that, of the residents currently employed, three work at a factory, two are waitresses, and one is seeking employment as an entertainer. Any questions regarding the suitability of a particular job are brought to the resident's supervising probation or parole officer for a final decision.

There are also deficiencies in documentation regarding another aspect of Vocare's contractual obligations, namely, information reflecting services of developing vocational and/or educational goals and programs tailored to the needs of each resident at the time of entrance into the program, and also information reflecting organized efforts to expand vocational opportunities by contacts with outside agencies. There was no evidence of any periodic evaluation of job performance or of follow-up data describing the outcome of initial vocational efforts. Again, such information will be provided in future reports, possibly by means of a questionnaire specifically designed for this purpose.

Figure 3

Distribution of Referral Sources to Vocare for Period of September 1, 1973, to February 28, 1974



\*Data provided bi-monthly except for 12/1-1/31.

\*\*Data provided for month of February.

DATES

B. Counseling Services

Another category of contractual objectives is related to Vocare's providing counseling services for all residents, including two group counseling sessions per week, round-the-clock availability of counseling staff, and supervision of counseling staff by a psychiatric consultant.

With reference to these latter objectives, there is one group counseling session per week in the form of a house meeting during which information is exchanged and residents provide each other with feedback about their behavior during the preceding week. These groups are led by the Program Director and Night Counselor; the Administrative Director usually attends them also. There is at least one staff member available on a 24-hour basis to deal with any particular problems which may arise and residents are encouraged to discuss their difficulties with this person and other residents. The atmosphere at the facility is conducive to honest communication and appears to foster a sense of trust among residents themselves and between residents and staff. It seems that interrelationships among the various participants in Vocare provides opportunity for beneficial therapeutic change, provided the individual is motivated. This is accomplished in a relaxed fashion without the pressure to "cop to" defects in oneself characteristic of similar programs.

Vocare has thus far been unsuccessful in obtaining the assistance of a psychiatric consultant, although the Board is making concentrated efforts in this regard and has approached several female psychiatric social workers to fill this position. Hopefully, this deficiency will be remedied in the near future.

Counselors from various drug abuse programs in the area have visited the facility to conduct therapy groups and to acquaint the residents who have more severe drug problems with the opportunities available for them to receive special help with this problem. These visits have been received very favorably by both residents and staff.

Medical and dental needs of residents are filled by either services donated by private doctors or accompanied visits to public health agencies.



C. Probation and Parole Conditions

Vocare's contract with the County specifies that, in cases of referrals from Santa Rita, Vocare is responsible for contacting the probation officer prior to making a commitment to accepting any particular client, and that the program will provide transportation for the accepted client from Santa Rita to Vocare.

Interviews with Vocare staff revealed that, in most cases, the obligation to provide transportation from Santa Rita is not applicable since most women are either released in court and can take public transportation to the facility, or they are transported by their probation officer. However, Vocare staff is willing to make arrangements to fulfill this contractual obligation despite the fact that the program does not have access to a vehicle yet.

Vocare is also required to contact the probation or parole officer assigned to any particular client if that client successfully completes the program, does not abide by the terms of probation or parole, or if she "splits". This is related to the fact that probation and parole officers retain responsibility for their clients and are thus allowed access to the facility on a 24-hour basis.

According to information from various probation officers, Vocare enjoys beneficial rapport and active communicative efforts regarding client progress and disposition.

IV EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

#### IV EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The program component primarily responsible for the operations of the program is the Board of Directors. Their meetings appear to be conducted efficiently and productively. Submitted copies of the minutes of meetings indicate that the Board has a sincere interest in Vocare and is willing to follow through by expending efforts on the program's behalf.

Board members are educated as to the objectives and policies of the program and appear supportive of both its staff and residents. The working relationship between the different administrative components of Vocare appears a mutually beneficial one. A Board member, the County Liaison, and the staff are in the process of reformulating precise objectives and goals for the program, including revising staff contracts to make them more accurately reflective of the characteristics of staff responsibilities.

The bi-monthly Board meetings are devoted to discussions of old and new business, and the three different Board committees as well as the Administrative and Program Directors present a report of their activities to date.

However, the functions assigned to each of the specific committees of the Board are not clearly delineated and this tends to result in an uneven distribution of responsibilities and areas left neglected. In particular, decisions regarding fiscal policies of the program are constrained by scarce and inconsistent communication between the Bookkeeper, Treasurer, and Board members regarding matters of budgetary allocations and fiscal accountability. The office of the Treasurer of the Board of Directors is an important one which does not presently appear to be given appropriate consideration.

Also, a more intensive investigation and delineation of the responsibilities appropriately assigned to Board members might result in their assumption of some of the functions currently on the shoulders of an already overburdened staff, thereby freeing them for more pressing programmatic issues which they are uniquely equipped to handle.

Also, the role to be played by the consulting psychiatrist when one is recruited is not clear. The staff is supposed to be accountable to him or her in matters of client problems but the method by which

this is to be accomplished is not specified and the relationship between this program person to the Board of Directors also is not specified.

V CONSTRAINTS OF AGENCY AND PROGRAM

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The transition in administration between the months of November and January had a severe effect on the operation of the project. During this period, agencies such as the Probation Department, uncertain as to the operation of the project, reduced the number of referrals to the project, causing severe financial hardships on the project which is required to maintain a maximum of 20 clients in order to receive adequate funding. The result of this was for the County to change the present budget from a per diem to a line item budget in order to alleviate the financial situation during this period. This, however, has left Vocare with severe financial handicaps from which they are still attempting to recuperate. As a result, they have had to offer their second house for sale since it is in danger of being foreclosed, despite the fact that recent contracts negotiated with the Federal Parole Department and with Federal Parole agencies outside Alameda County would have provided enough revenue to support this second house.

Monetary problems have also resulted in employees salaries being paid anywhere from two weeks to a month late. This undoubtedly has had an effect on the motivation of staff, particularly when they have just been hired. Programs such as Vocare generally suffer from the handicaps imposed by large staff turnover and difficulties such as late salaries compound the problem.

VI SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## VI SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this five-month interim evaluation report indicate that Vocare does provide a viable resource for women ex-offenders. It provides them with lodging and meals and a therapeutic link between incarceration and return to the community including intensive vocational placement and counseling and the opportunity for personal growth through formal and informal counseling sessions. Although the program has recently undergone a transition in administration, intensive communication between the members of the Board of Directors and the newly hired staff have provided some method of insuring continuity of program functions.

The handicaps imposed by severe financial strain resulting from a drop in referrals between the months of November 1973 and January 1974 limit the potential effectiveness of Vocare. Expansion of their contracts with various criminal justice agencies and their consequent increased referral load need to be accompanied by comparable adjustments in program capacity such as hiring additional staff, obtaining the use of a vehicle and consideration of their opening a second facility. Despite such limitations, the competence of present staff and high quality of program services warrants continued funding. The following areas have been identified.

- A. Allocation of revenue sharing funds should be expedited so that essential program activities can be implemented without additional strain. In particular, staff salaries should be paid according to contracts. The possibility of hiring at least one additional staff member to help with supervisory functions necessitated by an increased client population with a history of drug involvement should be explored. Funds should be made available for program staff to have the use of a vehicle to accompany clients on necessary appointments and for visiting facilities for the purpose of interviewing prospective clients. Until such time, staff should be reimbursed for mileage costs when they use their own vehicles.
- B. Although the present staff appears competent to handle any pressing client problems, the assistance of a consulting psychiatrist should be obtained immediately under the assumption that staff will be able to more competently deal with client's problems



and to conduct therapy groups and individual sessions with maximum effectiveness. Since this is included in the County Revenue Sharing Contract, it is hard to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of such assistance since it appears that Vocare never enjoyed consultation with a psychiatrist. The possibility of obtaining such assistance from County Mental Health agencies should be explored.

- C. Communication with County and Federal Probation and Parole offices should be kept at a maximum level so that referral flow is without interruption and required reporting is submitted.
- D. Information necessary for further evaluation of contractual objectives needs to be obtained. Data collecting methods and instruments currently employed by the program need to be modified, particularly those listed below:
  - 1. Specific job placement and referral processes need to be recorded in a systematic, standardized manner.
  - 2. Forms and procedures need to be designated expressly for this purpose. These should include information regarding previous job history, current employment data such as place of employment, length of employment, rate of pay, record of client earnings, client perceptions of job(s) held, and future plans. The same type of information should be recorded with respect to programs of vocational and/or educational training programs.
  - 3. Casework data needs to be collected upon initial entry into the program to provide baseline data for comparative analysis studies. Such information should include: information about referral sources, pertinent case history, referrals to other agencies, problems and goals, evaluation of progress reports, record of significant incidents, discharge reports, and other information necessary and appropriate to the program and/or client's individual case.
  - 4. Forms currently employed by the program need to be consistently completed so that abbreviations represent the same thing throughout. An additional column should be added to describe clients' involvement in vocational and educational training programs.

5. A method for compiling follow-up data needs to be devised so that some information is available reflecting what happens to a client upon completion of the program. This information should be collected periodically for an appropriate length of time after the woman has left the facility.
6. The functions appropriately assigned to the Board of Directors need to be clarified, particularly with respect to the Treasurer so that fiscal accountability will no longer be problematical. Some of the duties currently the responsibility of an already overburdened staff might possibly be assumed by the Board. This possibility needs further exploration.

VII METHODOLOGY

APPENDIX I

VOCARE PRE-APPLICATION SUMMARY

## VII. METHODOLOGY

This interim report concludes Task 1 of the Work Plan in our proposal wherein all program components were surveyed and problem areas identified. Within the remaining portion of this contract, Tasks 2, 3, and 4 will be completed.

While the evaluation will not utilize a control population, the design will allow for quantitative and qualitative assessment of the project and program areas using both effort-related and performance-related measures.

The plan will involve revision of intake and follow-up data forms (see Recommendation Section) to allow for better assessment of the impact of the program on the client population. All data collection instruments developed will be reviewed by the project staff for their input before pre-testing and final administration.

During the data collection phase of the evaluation, key agency officials and representatives will be interviewed. Data analysis will begin toward the middle of the data collection phase. Efforts will be made to translate findings into the most useful and meaningful form for the County and the project.

APPENDIX I

VOCARE

PRE\*APPLICATION SUMMARY

Date \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____
Name of Agent	Telephone No.

Name of Client \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_ In Custody \_\_\_\_\_  
Not in Custody \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for custody \_\_\_\_\_

Length of sentence \_\_\_\_\_ Release Date \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Convictions \_\_\_\_\_

Addict \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_ Alcoholic \_\_\_\_\_ Prior Mental Hospital \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status \_\_\_\_\_ No. Minor Children \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Work History \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____
Referral Source	Agency

CO; ih 6. 23. 72

APPENDIX II

VOCARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## APPENDIX II

VOCARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Profession</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
<u>Chairperson</u> Jude Michaels	2340 LeConte, #203 Berkeley, CA 94709	Presbyterian Minister worker; works for Glide	848-7122
<u>Vice-Chairperson</u> Cleve Hammonds	237 South 10th Street Richmond, CA 94801	Parolee Service Association	
<u>Secretary</u> Hilda Creque	6818 Gladys Street San Francisco, CA 94110	Organizes C.A.S.E. State clerical workers	529-1687
<u>Treasurer</u> Jacqueline Townsend	P.O. Box 993 Oakland, CA 94604	Probation Officer	832-4485
Dion Aroner	Board of Supervisors 1221 Oak Street Oakland, CA 94612	Administrative Assistant to Tom Bates	874-5236
Ronnie Jackel	Legal Aid Office East Oakland Office 8803 East 14th Street Oakland, CA 94621	Legal Aid Attorney	569-1133
Frances LeCain	Telecredit Corporation 680 Beach Street San Francisco, CA 94109	Market Analyst	673-8871
Margie Gelb	Legal Aid Office East Oakland Office 8803 East 14th Street Oakland, CA 94621	Legal Aid Attorney	569-1133
Betty Arca	1940 Cortereal Avenue Oakland, CA 94611	Teacher	339-1314



**END**