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## Inmates Ask Drug Program Data; Meeting Set Up With Prisoners

Some inmates at Chester County Farms have shown an interest in Narcotics Anonymous. How do they get in touch with the group? — J. M., West Chester, Pa.

Call 276-2703. The 20-member-group of ex-addicts meets nightly throughout Philadelphia area. Anyone with drug problem can call any time, day or night. Headquarters are: Narcotics Anonymous, World Service Office, 2335 Crenshaw blvd., Los Angeles, Calif., 90016. Action Line also put you in touch with Dr. Catherine Hess, narcotics advisor to State Secretary of Health in Harrisburg. She'll discuss details of prisoner self-help program begun by addicts at Huntingdon State Correctional Institution. Program, called HEAD (Human Efforts Against Drugs), will be started at Muncy, the state's correctional institution for women, this spring.

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# New drug-free treatment may be answer for addicts



Courier-Post Photo by E. Dousmanis

**DR. MARGARET PATTERSON** and Robert Oliver, a drug abuse aide, demonstrate how the new treatment is used.

By **MARIA A. RODRIGUEZ**  
Special to the Courier-Post

**GLOUCESTER TWP.** — Traditional methods of treating drug addicts take an average of 18 months, are painful, and often result in addiction to a substitute drug.

But there is a quicker, painless, drug-free treatment developed by a British surgeon that has apparently proven successful and may be offered before long to addicts at Turning Point, the Camden County Drug Treatment Center, here.

The treatment is called Neuro Electric Therapy. It was discovered by chance seven years ago by Dr. Margaret Patterson, who claims to have been treating drug addicts with this method in England at a remarkable success rate of 100 percent.

Patterson, 56, was invited to Turning Point this month to demonstrate the procedure to the staff and to treat a group of addicts with the new method, which had never been tried in the United States.

feel cured. Every patient, however, should receive therapy afterward, she said.

**THE RESULTS** of Patterson's study at Turning Point are being evaluated and will not be conclusive for six months.

But Dr. Vincent J. Whalen, executive director of Turning Point, said NET is "faster, more efficient, and much less painful" than any other means of detoxification he has ever seen.

"NET does work, but the treatment is still experimental in nature," he said. "The treatment

IN NET, two surface electrodes, placed behind the patient's ears, are hooked up to a machine capable of delivering varying frequencies of electrical stimulation, Patterson explained. Different frequencies are used according to the type of drug involved and the type of individual, she added.

"The amount of electrical stimulus is very mild," she said. "This method of treatment is radically different from electric shock therapy."

The patient is hooked up to the stimulator machine continuously for five days and nights and then intermittently for another five days.

Patterson said that, in every case so far, at the end of the 10-day treatment the patient is withdrawn completely from the drug with a minimum of discomfort.

**"THE PATIENT** feels physically well, he can sleep, and he has a better grip on life," she said. "The speed of withdrawal gives the addict courage."

lacks full research and empirical data."

Whalen said he will go to Washington next month to ask the National Institute of Drug Abuse for about \$300,000 to conduct a 12-month NET study using 100 patients at Turning Point.

**HE SAID** further research on NET must be conducted to judge its long-term effectiveness before it is offered at Turning Point.

Dr. George Piper, Turning Point's medical director, said he was "cautiously impressed" with the NET study.

This is the first half of the treatment. Intensive therapy, dealing with the addicts' problems, is used as a follow-up, just as in the traditional way of treating drug addicts, Patterson said.

NET is effective, she explained, because it stimulates the body to reproduce its own natural opiates, which the brain had stopped producing when the patient became a drug addict.

Patterson said she is astonished at the good long-term results of NET, as most patients refuse the second 50 percent of the treatment, which lasts about two months.

**"A LOT OF** addicts will dabble with drugs afterward and return again for treatment, but few get readdicted," she said. "Drugs just don't mean the same things they used to. Addicts will stay off drugs because they see they can feel good without them."

In treating the drug addicts at Turning Point, Patterson said two patients who were not interested in

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the treatment dropped out of the study.

NET was used on two other addicts who were completely detoxified "with no trouble." Toward the end of her stay, Patterson also began treatment on another patient who was in the control group. Not one of the five addicts was willing to undergo the second half of the treatment, she said.

Many addicts feel they do not need any further counseling, Patterson explained, because after the 10-day initial treatment, their craving for drugs is completely gone and they

"The results have been good with a minimum number of addicts," he said. "We need a larger study before NET is offered here."

Pete Gallione, the center's treatment coordinator and an ex-drug addict, said he was "extremely impressed" with the immediate results.

"At first I was very skeptical, but now I think it really works," he said. "I'd like to see NET implemented here as an alternative to methadone on a long-term basis."

NET is "the biggest breakthrough ever" in drug treatment, Gallione said.

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