In fact, the department maintains close links with physicians as well as with social service and crisis care agencies in the community, and has a consultation service available to all areas of the hospital. Members of this department also participate on government committees, helping to formulate general and specific policies regarding mental health.

Nurses in the Department of Psychiatry have a great deal of responsibility, including evaluating new patients dealing with families of the mentally ill, creating and maintaining a therapeutic environment, delivering outpatient services, and assisting in the development of proper management plans.

Wide Range of outpatient services A wide variety of treatment services is offered by the department on an outpatient basis at the Institute of Community and Family Psychiatry (ICFP). There are clinics to evaluate and assess patients, medication and subspecialty clinics (e.g. for treatment of problems such as manic-depression), behaviour therapy, a sexual dysfunction clinic, rehabilitation services, a day hospital, extended care services (long term care of chronically ill patients), services for children and youth, and a family therapy service which has gained an enviable reputation for excellence. The department also oversees a supervised apartment living project designed to foster independence in patients who are capable of functioning within the community.

Another active and highly successful project is the Jewish General Hospital's (JGH) Hospitalization Services Program (HSP) for elderly patients. Providing them with much needed outlets for socialization, the program has effectively kept many of them out of the hospital. This is all the more remarkable considering that some of these patients have had longstanding psychiatric problems throughout their lives. For those who require it, home care is available.

Research: a priority Dr. Beck, who succeeded Dr. Henry Kravitz, Chief Emeritus, who continues to maintain involvement in the community, and has a research committee, has been a driving force behind the development of the Research section, directed by Dr. Liliane Spector-Dunsky and Dr. Philip Beck. This success is a source of great pride to Dr. Beck. "There has been a major effort to increase our commitment to research," he explains, "to complement our strengths in clinical care and in teaching psychiatry at McGill University," he explains. Members of the department are actively involved in research covering a broad spectrum of mental health issues. Projects include patient care, community, family, geriatric and transcultural psychiatry; psychodynamics and psychotherapy; emotional, personality and somatization disorders; presentation of illness and body concept; sexual dysfunction; and many other areas of psychiatric interest. For example, in the community psychiatry category, there is a research project on pregnancy and drug abuse, another on postpartum depression. Dr. John Sigal's book about the intergenerational effects of the Holocaust, Trauma and Rebirth, (co-authored by Morton Weinfeld), was based on detailed surveys of three generations of Jewish Montrealers. Dr. Jean Claude Laury has done extensive research on cultural communities in Quebec, with a specific focus on Montreal's North African Jewish community. Dr. Laurence Kirmayer, who was recently appointed Director, Division of Social and Transcultural Psychiatry, McGill University, is working closely with Inuit health care centres, studying the mental health problems of Eskimos. Dr. Kirmayer is also working on a study of individuals' concepts of mind, self and person, and has collaborated with Dr. Jim Robbins on a study of physicians' responses to patients' complaints of fatigue.

Other projects include a study of the quality of life in patients with breast cancer, an examination of the outcomes results of the various forms of therapy, a follow-up investigation of the intellectual development of very low birth weight babies, and suicide in schizophrenics.

Left to right: Dr. Ronald Feldman, Liliane Spector-Dunsky and Philip Beck.

Focus of the Department of Psychiatry Clinical activities: The department provides treatment programs for individuals and groups of all ages - childhood to the elderly - on an in and outpatient basis. Urgent problems are treated in the in-outpatient and emergency psychiatry.

Research: Some of the research projects currently underway deal with community, family, geriatric and transcultural psychiatry, as well as emotional and personality disorders.

Teaching: Members of the Department of Psychiatry train residents and medical students from McGill University.

Funding for these essential teaching and research activities is NOT provided by the government.

Severe overcrowding necessitates renovations at a cost of $500,000.