

ADVISORY EDUCATIONAL GROUP
School Health Bureau - Welfare Division
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company

At the meeting of the Special Committee on December 30, 1937, the following were present: Miss Abbot, Dr. Armstrong, Dr. Cooper, Dr. Dublin, Miss Jean, Dr. Kelly, Dr. Lanza, Dr. Nyswander, Dr. Ryan, Dr. Sandiford, Dr. Sherbon, Dr. Sundwall, Dr. Sutton, Dr. Turner, and Miss Williamson.

Dr. Armstrong, in opening the meeting, expressed appreciation for the guidance of the Advisory Educational Group during the past year in the activities of the School Health Bureau. He also asked for the continued interest and help of the Group in carrying forward our program along lines which are appropriate and useful for an organization such as ours.

BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Dr. Armstrong spoke of the business activities of the Company as well as of the Welfare work itself. The business activities of the Company are, of course, of significance in many ways - principally because it is mainly through contacts with the policyholders that the Welfare program of the Company is effective. The year 1937 as a whole is one of the best, if not the best, in the business experience of the Company. The insurance now in force totals about 22 billion 600 million dollars. From a mortality point of view it has also been the best year for policyholders. New lows for many diseases are recorded for the entire experience of the Company.

GENERAL WELFARE PROGRAM

In regard to the Welfare program, the literature distribution for the year exceeds any past record, the total amount being in the neighborhood of 65 million copies, about 40 million of these going into the homes of policyholders via the Agents who make contacts there. The number of people attending showings of Metropolitan films has decreased. This is natural because

of the gradual decline in the use of "Once Upon a Time." Two new films have been produced - "A New Day," a motion picture illustrating modern methods of dealing with pneumonia, and "Safety in Numbers," a sound film strip on community safety. These films were launched this year for theatrical showings, and it is hoped that a version of "A New Day" will soon be ready for school use. Audiences have been most appreciative of these new presentations. "A New Day" and "Safety in Numbers" were shown to the Special Committee who were most enthusiastic over them.

The number of safety campaigns and exhibits has increased. The total last year for the first 11 months was 3,063. This year for the corresponding time it was 3,705. Two new window display cards were issued - one on appendicitis and the other on syphilis. A new booklet on home safety has just been published. It will be announced through advertisements in the magazines and newspapers calling attention to the incidence of home accidents, which is generally higher than the incidence of street accidents. An interesting phase of the street safety program which is just beginning to receive attention is the question of the relation of the human factor - both mental and physical - to the accident.

On the nursing side, there is an increase in the volume of contacts this year over that of last year. At the same time there has been a rather marked increase in the cost of nursing visits, and we are cooperating with other agencies in analyzing this increased cost. We are, naturally, interested in finding out whether there are ways to control the tendency for the cost to rise. This would be of advantage not only to ourselves, but also to community chests, local agencies, and visiting nurse associations that must raise the funds to support a large proportion of the nursing work of a community.

We are taking a very marked interest in pneumonia control. Besides the

motion picture, "A New Day," special exhibits prepared for the American Medical Association are being used very widely throughout this country and Canada. We have cooperated with the New York City Department of Health in a special pneumonia control campaign. The motion picture film, which for showings in New York City is introduced by a prologue spoken by the Commissioner of Health, started with a showing in Radio City, where it reached 120,000 people. In Massachusetts it was announced by a letter of proclamation from the State Health Commissioner, and in Maine the Governor is making a prologue. Similar arrangements will be made in other States.

Our wall card on syphilis has been greatly in demand. We printed 1,000 at first, which were offered to health officers. It was necessary to print 2,000 more to meet the demand, particularly in connection with requests from social hygiene committees. The Company is planning another advertisement coincident with the Social Hygiene Day Campaign. The use of "The Great Imitator" has been liberalized, and we have printed a special letter, "A Message to Fathers," signed by Surgeon-General, Dr. Thomas Parran, to be distributed with the booklet.

WORLD'S FAIR EXHIBITS

Dr. Armstrong then introduced Dr. Dublin, asking him to talk about the Company's activities in relation to the World's Fair and to add something about his work as Chairman of the Health and Medical Committee of the Fair.

Dr. Dublin explained that there are a total of some 29 million human beings in every corner of the United States and Canada insured with the Company. These 29 million policyholders are concentrated into more than 13 million families - about 40 percent of the total number of families in the country. This means that the Metropolitan Agents' influence reaches two out of every five families in the country.

This figure when totaled with the millions of copies of publications distributed, nursing visits made, and other Welfare services rendered, makes one realize that the Company is a force in American Life. It is because it has the very real conviction that it is a constructive force that it feels called upon to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the World's Fair in New York, to tell a story to millions.

It is estimated that 50 million people will go through the gates, many of whom will be our policyholders. It is proposed to tell them the story of the Company's contacts with the family, the service rendered through insurance, what insurance does for people, and the service which the tremendous power of assets renders this country.

Dr. Dublin then outlined the plans for the exhibit. On entering the exhibit hall, the visitor will be immediately struck with an heroic sculptured group at the end of the hall. This figure, representing a typical American family, has been chosen as the proper symbol of the Company's operations. A mural will run the entire gamut of this hall -150 feet- and a skilled muralist is now working on sketches, which will tell the story of what it means to be insured in the Metropolitan in terms of specific advantages, and which will illustrate the working of this program in the homes of the people. In other parts of the exhibit there will be various devices to illustrate special phases of the Company's program. Then there will also be a theater, but what will be shown in this theater has not yet been decided.

Another part of the World's Fair will be devoted to the whole field of medicine and health. A building, about 80,000 square feet, will contain exhibits which will follow three leads - a hall of man, where the biology of

man will be presented; a hall of medicine; and a hall of public health.

There are 360 to 370 leaders in America in the field of medicine and public health who are working in groups of 10 and 15 on this project. It will be financed by reputable commercial organizations, but the control will rest entirely with the committees. We have in mind the 50 million people who will walk through that building, and we want to catch them by dramatic means. Theoretical considerations will be played up least; practical considerations most. It is hoped that this exhibit will not be destroyed but will be kept permanently as a museum of hygiene. Dr. Dublin appealed for ideas and suggestions.

The theme for the School Health Bureau part of the World's Fair, Miss Williamson reported, will be scientific and biographical material in health teaching. This subject is integrated with all our activities through correspondence, conferences, preparation and distribution of material, demonstration, and research. The artist for the murals visited a New York City high school where he sketched pupils making slides, using microscopes, caring for mice, and growing plants in their biology classes.

EXPANSION OF SCHOOL HEALTH BUREAU ACTIVITIES

During the year, the work of the School Health Bureau expanded along all lines. In the field of physical education Miss Sefton, who has charge of this phase of our work, visited colleges and universities and spoke at State and national educational meetings, where she represented both the School Health Bureau and the Women's Division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation. She contributed material for the revision of a posture pamphlet for our policy-holders.

This year, for the first time, we had representation at the meeting of the National Association for Nursery Education. Miss Craig, a specialist in

this field, attended. She is helping in the preparation of material for younger children. This has been recommended by the Committee on Publications, of which Miss Abbot is Chairman.

Talks have been made on visual education at several meetings. A film strip on Jenner is being prepared, and Mr. Lewin, Chairman of the Committee on Motion Pictures of the Department of Secondary Education of the National Education Association, is working with high school children to develop a guide to accompany this strip.

Correspondence and literature distribution have increased during the year in spite of the fact that no new publication was issued for schools. The number of booklets distributed to schools upon request has increased to nearly 10 million, and the number of letters received from schools passed the 80 thousand mark.

Reference Booklet for School Administrators

In a new unit presented to the Special Committee the necessity is recognized for focusing the energies of some of the professional groups, with whom we are now cooperating, on the needs of the school administrator, particularly in connection with three definite problems:

Where can the school administrator secure the best help in revising his curriculum?

Where can ^{he}~~we~~ turn for help in the selection of the specialists on his staff?

Where can ^{he}~~we~~ send teachers to secure good practical courses in school health education?

Since such material is greatly needed and no other agency seems to be filling this gap at the present time, the group unanimously endorsed the appointment of a committee of the Advisory Educational Group to prepare a

reference booklet for school administrators on what different organizations have to offer them in the solution of these three problems. Dr. Ryan accepted the chairmanship of this committee with Dr. Sutton and Dr. Turner as the other members.

During the discussion of this project, it was decided that the committee take into consideration not only the immediate proposal for a reference booklet, but also a review of the whole field and our relationship to it. This might include an inquiry on the training in schools of education of people who are taking courses leading to school administration. It was brought out that the teacher of today may be the administrator of tomorrow, and many of the students in our professional schools for teachers are going to be not only teachers but also administrators later on. There are many ways of meeting problems of administration. Among these are the establishment and maintenance of sound school health programs, required courses in health for teachers in training, and courses organized around the administrators' special problems.

School Health Study

Dr. Nyswander, Director of the School Health Study, of which we are one of the sponsors, was then introduced. She gave a resume of the method and purpose of the study. The aim of the study is not to take over any of the services of the health department or of the education department. It is to explore and to redirect the actual staff itself, which is oftentimes a more difficult problem. The study was started with two people, the Director and an assistant. A pediatrician and public health nurse consultant were added as the problems developed. A lack of balance has been felt because of the absence of a health education expert, but it is hoped that this gap will be filled.

The existing staff in the experimental area of eight schools, with an enrollment of 10,000, consisted of three school physicians, seven nurses, a supervising nurse, and a health officer. These staff people were all professionals who had something to contribute. A plan was devised for working with them together with the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and the principals of the eight experimental schools. No policy was carried into effect which had not been thoroughly discussed by the round-table method, with each of these people representing their own groups, presenting their own problems, and indicating their willingness to try out the policy, to see it through experimentally, and then to report results back to the group.

Problems are investigated in every phase of the service. Tentative solutions to the problems are set up, tried out for a while, and then tried out again in a slightly varied form. Some of the problems are: The selection of cases in the schools. How often should children be examined? Should all examinations be done carefully or should selected groups be given rapid screening service? Should children be referred by the teachers? In the follow-up simple questions come up such as, what should a nurse write on the card after she has made a home visit? Another question is the problem of filing, and experiments are being made with two ways of filing. Members of the School Health Study staff are also working on the problem of contact with parents. To what types of letters do parents give the best response? What mental hygiene elements enter into parent-nurse conferences in relation to each specific defect? What are the clinic facilities and how may they best be coordinated? On the administrative side, there are such problems as redirection of the staff and bringing about cooperation between bureaus in one department as well as between departments.

So much progress has been made that in the eight schools being studied the teachers have conferences with the physicians after the medical examinations. In some special rooms the teacher is present at all examinations. They have an ideal set-up because all are working on one problem. Oftentimes they concentrate on a single child, and everyone works on that child to discover the trouble.

Health Bulletin for Teachers

The monthly edition of the Health Bulletin for Teachers is now 165,000. This year we have purposely been a little "highbrow", and the teachers have not always been able to put the material to practical use immediately. However, some of the bulletins, particularly the one on pneumonia, have been praised highly as excellent statements on difficult subjects. Dr. Cooper, Chairman of the Committee, raised questions and stimulated discussion which led to valuable suggestions as to the nature of future bulletins.

Exhibit Committee

The Exhibit Committee headed by Miss Jean has limited itself to the study of exhibits unattended by a staff member. Exhibits must be considered a part of the visual education program of the School Health Bureau. The general effect of exhibits, as well as the individual displays of material, furnish a definite educational opportunity in visual education. The committee recommended that exhibit books, similar to those already prepared in the School Health Bureau, be offered to all summer schools and professional schools for teachers. This will involve making about 200 books.

Committee on Motion Pictures

Dr. Sherbon, Chairman of the Committee on Motion Pictures, asked Dr. Turner to discuss his ideas for a visual presentation relating to the unit of

teaching the nature of bacteria. He proposed a film picturing children of about seventh grade age carrying out a project on the study of bacteria. It might be in the form of a review, individual children telling of the investigations which they made or which were made by their particular group. If it could be made into two reels, the first might be on the nature of bacteria and the second on bacteria at work. In the latter reel the children would report upon the study of different activities carried out by bacteria such as: A study of the making of sauerkraut; a study of the rotting of an apple, showing how the skin normally protects the apple, but when bacteria get through a break in the skin they grow in the "infected" part of the apple; and examples of ways in which we prevent the spread of bacteria as shown by sanitary food handling, by the boiling of dishes, by the care of water supply, by the treatment of cuts, and by isolation and quarantine. The committee approved the suggestion, and Dr. Turner was asked to get further concrete suggestions as to the content of the film, desirable length, cost, etc.

PROFESSIONAL REORGANIZATIONS WHICH INFLUENCE THE SCHOOL HEALTH BUREAU

In the last year significant changes have been taking place which affect school health programs. National associations are reorganizing with a view to better service for school children. What is the relation of the School Health Bureau to these changes? Since members of the Advisory Educational Group and of the School Health Bureau are active in many of the new developments, the opportunity was taken to review current problems in school health education and how new programs of national organizations affect our work.

Higher Education

In the discussion of significant changes in higher education, Dr. Ryan pointed out trends in four directions which indicate growing concern for health.

(1) There seems to be at present an interest in human concerns, especially health, on the part of research organizations. This is illustrated by the six-year review of Josiah Macy, Jr., Foundation and this year's Rockefeller Foundation report which recognize that "The proper study of mankind is man."

(2) Recent general educational pronouncements are giving prominence to health education. For example, the Report of the American Council on Education on Student Personnel places emphasis on what happens to individual students in health and physical education.

(3) Health is, or can be, a significant factor in the "general education" plan of all higher educational institutions. This is especially true today with the development of junior colleges and the changes going on in teachers colleges particularly along two lines - the lengthening of preparation at all levels and the tendency to emphasize "general education" for the first two years.

(4) Special emphasis is being placed on health in teacher-training studies. The American Council on Education has recently succeeded in getting financial support for a special project. The American Committee of the International Teacher-Training Commission is especially concerned with health, personality, and other "nonacademic" aspects of teacher education. The American Council is asking this small group to help in working out plans for teacher training. It seems especially important that these studies cover as broad a field as possible, that they be directed toward an enriched program of education rather than a statistical compilation, and that they include in their scope administrators as well as teachers.

The Educational Policies Commission

The Educational Policies Commission of the American Association of

School Administrators has in preparation five basic reports. Dr. Sutton pointed out that one of the reports will include a great deal on health. There will be sections on health examinations, mental hygiene, and the health of teachers. There is also the possibility that one of the future Yearbooks of the Association may be on the subject of health.

Curriculum Revisions in Canada

The provinces of Canada are now revising their curricula. Dr. Sandiford reviewed the steps which led to the making of these curricula and described some of the basic features of the revisions. An attempt has been made to give more freedom than ever before to both teachers and pupils. Side by side with the teaching of "tool" subjects, "enterprises" have been introduced, and some of the problems arranged in units. The development of character and citizenship is stressed. New subjects have been introduced such as shop work, art, and music. The emphasis has been placed on health education. For example, the first subject dealt with in the Ontario revision is health.

The American Association for Health and Physical Education

The American Association for Health and Physical Education, a department of the National Education Association, has been created by the merging of the American Physical Education Association and a health department of the National Education Association. Dr. Turner explained that this new association is divided into three sections: physical education, health education, and recreation. The members of the health section are physicians, nurses, nutritionists, and specialists in teacher training and health instruction. This section is concerned with the teaching of health regardless of who does it. Contacts will be developed with other groups who are working in this field.

Dr. Turner also raised the question of a health education coordinator. The

possibility of using a person well trained both in health and education and making a unified project of health education in the community may help to solve in a large measure the problem of getting increased professional service. He asked that those present keep this in mind in connection with their other professional contacts and give him suggestions for the committee to consider.

The American School Health Association

The American School Health Association was formed by enlarging the American Association of School Physicians to include the active participation of dentists, nurses, nutritionists, public health workers and others engaged in school health work who have a scientific training. Dr. Sundwall told the group that the Association is also interested in adding to the educational qualifications of these specialists so that we may look forward to a school health man or woman who has a good educational background as well as scientific training. In reply to a question from Dr. Kelly as to whether there are any marked tendencies on the part of young doctors to take up school work as a life career, Dr. Sundwall answered that in his Department there are now 15 physicians who are examining the various fields in public health with a view to adopting school health careers as a lifelong work.

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The meeting ended with a feeling of great satisfaction. The discussions laid the foundation for the future work of the School Health Bureau and a closer coordination of its various activities with the newer developments in the field.