

714 Voluntary Health Insurance in Two Cities. A Survey of Subscriber-Households.

Odin W. Anderson. Harvard University Press, Cambridge 38, Mass. 145 pp. (1957). \$5.00.

This book, drawn entirely from new material, gives a serious and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of certain health insurance benefits. Families enrolled in Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Birmingham, Ala., and Boston, Mass., and families belonging to employed groups enrolled under the Aetna plan in Boston, were interviewed with a pre-tested questionnaire. The investigation revealed how much the prevailing pattern of benefits helped families to pay in a year for various types of service. The benefits were quite adequate for hospital care and surgery. It was clearly indicated, however, that the cost of home and office calls, obstetrical services, drugs and medicines, and dental care, which voluntary health insurance does not attempt to cover, can present major problems to some families. A high proportion of the families were satisfied with the coverage. Of those who were not satisfied many were in favor of increased non-hospital benefits, and about two-thirds of these were willing to pay additional premiums for those benefits. A small majority preferred the small-expense type of insurance to major medical insurance or to both. Other details and their implications are discussed.

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715 Silicones in Medicine and Surgery. R. R. McGregor, Dow Corning Corporation, Midland, Mich. 44 pp. (1957). Obtainable without charge from publisher.

This brochure summarizes the conclusions of various authors with respect to the use of silicones in many branches of medicine and surgery. The value of silicones in the field of medicine is not due to their physiological action, but rather to their physical properties, since they are extremely inert, and to their resistance to enzymes and bacteria. The silicones and their decomposition products have a low order of toxicity. An important use is in dermatology, as constituents of barrier creams, ointments and cosmetics. Other uses discussed are: in instrument sterilization fluids; in dental applications; in coating of vials; in the treatment of cattle bloat; in the coating of tubing for blood handling and internal surgery; in gastroscopy; as carriers for injectables; in treatment of pulmonary edema and of peptic ulcers; and several miscellaneous applications. In some of these applications silicones are of established value; in some there is further work to be done; and in others their use has been suggested but their value has not been proved. The author is careful to distinguish between these categories in dealing with each of the applications discussed.

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716 Epilepsy. Grand Mal, Petit Mal, Convulsions. Letitia Fairfield.

Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th St., New York 16, N. Y. 159 pp. (1957). \$4.75.

The aspects of epilepsy considered are: definition, treatment, the epileptic child, employment, epileptics in the community, colonies for epileptics, and epileptics and the law. In the chapter on employment, a number of facts and fallacies are considered. Any epileptic whose fits are not fully controlled is unsuited for employment involving work with live machinery or vehicles, work where falls are possible, or work in isolated places. Other employment depends on the type of epilepsy, time and severity of seizures, after-effects, degree of mental deterioration if any, and treatment. Each case should be considered on its merits. Clerical work, accountancy, needle trades, tailoring, many kinds of factory work and handicrafts, gardening, horticulture, and domestic service are among the possibilities to be explored. Employment-finding services, epileptic clinics, industrial training, sheltered workshops, and other features of the British program are discussed.

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