

333 Example: miscellaneous

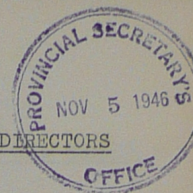
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M I N U T E S

FIRST FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE OF MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS

Department of National Health and Welfare

Ottawa, October 10 & 11, 1946



The first Federal-Provincial Conference of Mental Health Directors was held in the Board Room of the Department of National Health and Welfare on October 10th and 11th, 1946. The conference opened at 9.30 A.M. on Thursday, October 10th. Dr. C.G. Stogdill, Chief of the Mental Health Division, Department of National Health and Welfare was Chairman. Those attending the conference were Dr. G.D.W. Cameron, Deputy Minister of National Health; Dr. A.L. Crease, General Superintendent of Mental Hospitals, Essondale, B.C.; Dr. R.R. MacLean, General Superintendent of Provincial Mental Institutions, Ponoka, Alberta; Dr. R.O. Davison, Commissioner of Mental Health Services, Regina, Saskatchewan; Dr. T.A. Pincock, Provincial Psychiatrist, Winnipeg, Manitoba; Dr. R.C. Montgomery, Director of Hospitals Division, Department of Health, Toronto; Dr. L.R. Vezina, Director of Division of Hospitals for the Insane, Ministry of Health, Quebec, P.Q.; Dr. A.F. Chaisson, Medical Officer of Health, Department of Health, Fredericton, N.B.; Dr. Murray MacKay, Medical Superintendent, Nova Scotia Hospital, Dartmouth, N.S.; Dr. A.J. Murchison, Medical Superintendent, Falconwood Hospital, Charlottetown, P.E.I.; Dr. T.E. Dancey, Adviser in Psychiatry to Director General of Treatment Services, Department of Veterans Affairs; Dr. C.M. Hincks, General Director, National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Canada), Toronto;

Dr. D.G. McKerracher, Saskatchewan; Dr. J.D.M. Griffin, Medical Director, National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Canada), Toronto; Dr. Brian Bird, National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Canada); Miss E.C. Ogilvie, formerly of the Hartford Institute of Living; Dr. D.R. Easton, Department of Veterans Affairs, Edmonton, were guests during the sessions.

Dr. Stogdill introduced Dr. Cameron, Deputy Minister of National Health, who welcomed the delegates to the conference and explained that this was one of a series of conferences, sponsored by the Federal Department, the object being to offer the assistance of the Department of National Health and Welfare to the provinces in bringing about a coordinated effort to solve their common problems. He suggested that the problem of mental illness in Canada is probably the most important and at the same time the most neglected in the public health field.

Dr. Cameron explained the provision for the Dominion Council of Health in the National Health and Welfare Act, its composition and its relation as a sort of parent body to this conference. While it possesses no legislative authority, he pointed out that as a body it does carry a great deal of weight and has proved an effective means of getting appropriate action on many public health problems encountered by the provinces. Dr. Cameron suggested therefore that any matters on which this conference felt action was necessary should be put in the form of resolutions and referred to the Dominion Council of Health.

Dr. Stogdill then outlined the programme for the conference, and appointed Drs. Crease, MacKay and Montgomery to constitute a Resolutions Committee. He remarked that the delegates represented the aspect of medical science which accounted for almost one-third of all illness; that the mental hospitals of Canada contained almost as many beds as all the acute disease hospitals in the country, and that in every province more money was spent on mental hospitals than on any other activity of the respective Health Department. He hoped therefore that out of this meeting would come some concrete proposals for the development of research, treatment, and preventive programmes by which to attack the problem.

The conference then proceeded to discussion of items on the agenda.

Dr. Hincks suggested a letter to the provincial departments of health to ask that when pictures of this type are being released, the mental health commissioner of the province be consulted or included on the censor board. It was felt that this could be done best by a private agency such as the National Committee for Mental Hygiene (Canada).

IMMIGRATION AND PSYCHIATRY

Dr. C.P. Brown, Chief of the Quarantine and Immigration Medical Services of the Department of National Health and Welfare was then invited to speak to the delegates. He outlined the Immigration Act with respect to its provisions for exclusion of immigrants suffering from mental illness, and the facilities available to his department for conducting psychiatric examinations of prospective immigrants both in England and on the European continent. He drew attention to the legislative procedures enabling deportation of aliens who develop mental illness within five years of their arrival in Canada and to the internationally recognized though unwritten law permitting deportation after a period of five years domicile in a country providing proof could be obtained that the prohibiting illness antedated entry into the country. He emphasized, however, that in such cases a very complete history of the patient's illness was necessary to assist the department in collecting sufficient evidence to institute deportation proceedings, and suggested that it would save a lot of time and trouble if members present would remember this point when submitting cases for departmental action under this provision.

Dr. Pincock asked if any provision was made for examination of war brides to which Dr. Brown replied that in marrying Canadians, they attained the right of Canadian citizenship and therefore could not be denied entry regardless of the existence of ordinarily prohibitive diseases or conditions with which they might be affected.

Dr. Vezina felt that many immigrants brought to this country for mining or farming, after failing to make good or after becoming incapacitated with a mental illness, moved to the larger urban centres of Montreal and Toronto where they became a public charge on the respective provinces. He felt that since the Federal Government assumed total responsibility and risk in admitting these immigrants, it should assume the whole cost of their maintenance in mental institutions. Dr. MacLean concurred as to the existence of this problem and as to the Federal Government bearing at least part of the cost of such patients' maintenance in mental hospitals.

Dr. Montgomery read statistics on the number of the alien-born admitted to mental hospitals in Ontario, showing that those having more than five years domicile in Canada constitute a considerable portion.

HOSPITAL DESIGN

Mr. H.G. Hughes, Chief of the Hospital Design Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare, addressed the meeting briefly outlining the functions of his division which included assembling of plans for construction of mental hospitals so that the division would be in a position to advise the provinces. He asked the cooperation of the members of the conference in sending him ideas on any details of psychiatric hospital planning that were unique with them and that had worked outstandingly well. He intends to prepare model plans for all the various units of a mental hospital. These will be available to the provinces, as are also his services in an advisory capacity.