

THE BULLETIN

OF THE

ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

COLLEGE NEWS

SPRING QUARTERLY MEETING 1977

The Spring Quarterly Meeting was held in Inverness on 3 and 4 May, 1977 by kind invitation of Dr. Martin Whittet and the Highland Health Board. The President, Professor W. LINFORD REES was in the Chair.

Scientific Meetings

The first day's papers were devoted to topics related to Alcoholism. In the morning session on *The Epidemiology of Alcoholism* the following papers were read:

'Nationally', Dr A. B. Sclare; 'The Highlands and Islands', Dr Martin Whittet; 'Survey of Drinking Problems in a West of Scotland Urban Community', Dr P. Kershaw and Mr W. Saunders; and 'Prevention and Planning', Dr D. Player.

In the afternoon the papers were on *Research and Treatment in relation to Alcoholism* and were:

'Identification of the Syndrome', Professor H.

Walton; 'Detoxification of Alcoholics', Dr Bruce Ritson; and 'Korsakov's Syndrome', Dr John Cutting.

On the second day the morning session was devoted to a discussion on *Committees of Inquiry*, and the speakers included Professor A. K. M. Macrae, Dr J. M. Loughran, Dr W. Wright, and Mr R. Morrison, Chief Nursing Officer. In the afternoon papers were arranged by the Group for the Psychiatry of Old Age and the Psychotherapy Section. The papers presented by the Group were on topics related to *Geriatric Psychiatry* and were: 'The Cholinergic System in Dementia', Dr George Ashcroft; 'Trends in the Use of Mental Hospital Beds by the Elderly', Mrs Vera Carstairs; 'Impressions of Services for Geriatric Psychiatry as seen from the Scottish Hospital Advisory Service', Dr W. T. Thom.

Dr E. A. M. Wood, on behalf of the Psychotherapy Section presented a paper entitled 'Consultation to an Institution on the Development of a Special Unit'.

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Business Meeting

The Business Meeting was held on 4 May.

OBITUARY

The Registrar, Dr MORRIS MARKOWE, announced with regret the death of the following members:

EDWARD ARMSTRONG BENNETT, Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist, The Tavistock Clinic, London.

HILDA ELIZABETH BULLEN, Consultant Psychiatrist, Horncastle Co-Educational Boarding School, East Grinstead, W. Sussex.

MICHAEL SPENCER MCCABE, Department of Psychiatry, University of Iowa, U.S.A.

DAVID ROBERTSON, formerly Medical Superintendent, Bootham Park, York.

AUSTEN ROBERT SAMUEL, Consultant Psychiatrist, Belmont Hospital, Sutton, Surrey.

ROBERT ARNOLD WOODRUFF, Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Washington University School of Medicine and Assistant Psychiatrist, Barnes & Renard Hospitals.

MINUTES

Members had not yet received the May issue of *News and Notes* which contained the Minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 February 1977 and consideration and approval of these was therefore deferred until the next meeting.

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

Dr MARKOWE read the following report:

In my last report I referred to the Working Group on Organization and Management Problems of Mental Illness Hospitals. It was agreed that there should be increased psychiatric representation, and the College has put forward the names of Drs W. A. L. Bowen, T. Aric and D. H. Clark and has also requested that there should be an observer from the Mental Deficiency Section, as the remit of the Group has been extended to '... examine in relation to Mental Handicap services those problems and solutions common to Mental Illness and Mental Handicap'. We also suggested that although the terms of reference of the Group referred to England and Wales only, it would be helpful also to have observers from Ireland and Scotland.

Reference was also made in my last report to Consultant Responsibility. A Special Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr Brian Ward discussed this matter, and a draft memorandum was submitted to Council. This was subsequently revised and submitted to the Executive and Finance Committee, and approved. The memorandum was approved and has

been widely distributed and will be published in *News and Notes* (the *College Bulletin*). The responsibilities of the consultant as set out in our memorandum are not meant to be taken as comprehensive but as broad guidelines.

A memorandum on the use of ECT has been approved by the Council and will be published in the *Journal*.^{*} Arising from the recommendation contained in the College's memorandum on Confidentiality (*News and Notes*, January 1977) that there should be a multi-disciplinary committee on confidentiality, Council has nominated a small working group to form the nucleus of the committee to get it off the ground. Council has also been concerned at the position of some overseas trainees in relation to the discriminatory nature of *EEC Directives* and the Conference of Presidents of Royal Colleges was asked to consider publication of a statement recommending that all medical graduates who have completed the approved period of postgraduate training in an EEC country should be considered for EEC specialist registration irrespective of their country of origin or undergraduate training. At the request of the DHSS comments have been prepared on Mr Benyon's Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

Following the publication of the Report of the European Commission of Human Rights on the Investigation of the Interrogation Procedures used by the British Army on Civilians in Northern Ireland the College has considered the implications for medical practitioners and in particular for psychiatrists, and issued an appropriate statement (*News and Notes*, June 1977, p 11).

It has been agreed that work should go ahead on the installation of the Library at the College headquarters. This will necessarily take some time, as the floor has to be strengthened; the work will be undertaken during the summer holiday time so as to cause as little disruption as possible.

In accordance with our Charter and Bye-laws, Council made a nomination for the Presidency for 1977-78; no other nominations were received and Professor W. Linford Rees will enter his third year as our President at the Annual Meeting in July. I think we should also congratulate Professor Rees upon his nomination as President-Elect of the British Medical Association.

Finally, but not least, on behalf of the College and everyone here who has attended this wonderful meeting in Inverness, I must say thank you. We have had the opportunity of thanking many generous people and official bodies at the Dinner and will

^{*} *British Journal of Psychiatry*, September 1977, 131, 261-72.

again be doing so at the Ceilidh tonight. Here today I wish to mention particularly Dr Martin Whittet who has not spared himself to make the whole meeting such an outstanding success; Dr W. B. Wright who has looked after us so well here at Craig Phadrig; and all the staff at both hospitals, catering, nursing, secretarial, domestic, medical and all those too numerous to mention who have given so generously of their time, effort and goodwill.

In the ensuing discussion it was noted that no reply had been received from the DHSS to the request that a consultant in mental deficiency should be appointed as an observer on the Working Group on Organization and Management Problems of Mental Illness Hospitals. Some exception was expressed to the specific nature of the press release on Interrogation Procedures; it was felt by some members present that a more general statement would have been more appropriate, but no action was recommended.

Social Functions

On the evening of Monday, 2 May, members of the College were graciously received at their home at Cawdor by The Rt. Hon. Lord Campbell of Croy and Lady Campbell, and this generous and hospitable greeting welcomed the College to a Meeting which was to be full of generosity and hospitality. We are very grateful to the Highland Health Board for the memorable Ceilidh at which highland hospitality was much in evidence and also for their support of our meetings at Craig Dunain and Craig Phadrig Hospitals; we were sorry that the Chairman of the Board, Mr Robert Wallace was not able to be with us, but were very pleased that Mr Rosie was able to attend. The President and Officers were also received at the Town House by the Provost of Inverness, Mr Ian Fraser.

The College is grateful to all those who contributed towards making this a most memorable scientific and social gathering.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONSULTANTS IN PSYCHIATRY WITHIN THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

Since the publication of the above Memorandum (*Bulletin*, September 1977, pp 4-7) several doubts have been expressed about the responsibility of employing authorities in relation to cases involving professional conduct and professional competence.

It is the responsibility of the employer to investigate complaints against medical staff, and guidance is

issued in HM (61 112) on the procedure to be followed in serious disciplinary cases involving hospital doctors. This circular includes cases involving personal conduct, professional conduct and professional competence. Hospital consultants are advised to consult their defence organizations where any of the above inquiries are proposed.

SOUTH WESTERN DIVISION

The Autumn Meeting of the South Western Division will be held at the Basingstoke District Hospital, Park Prewett, Basingstoke, on Thursday, 27 October, from 10.30 am. Following a tour of the hospital, business meetings and lunch, there will be, at 2.30 pm, a symposium on 'Over-Prescribing of Psychotropic Drugs', with papers by Dr John

Bennett, Professor Eric Wilkes and Dr Guy Edwards, and discussion in which all the speakers will take part. Further details from the Honorary Secretary of the Division, Dr C. Davies, Weston Lodge Hospital, Weston, Bath BA1 4DW, Avon.

The Spring 1978 meeting will be held in Bournemouth, provisionally on 14-15 April.