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On the Neurological Handicap

The University of California School of Public Health (Berkeley) conducted an Institute on "Neurologically Handicapping Conditions in Children" in June, 1961, to assist administration and staff of Maternal and Child Health and Crippled Services Bureaus of the California State Department of Public Health in program development. Participants were from Regions VIII and IX of the Children's Bureau, which gave its financial support to the institute. Guest faculty members were drawn from institutions and agencies in many parts of the country. The published 151-page proceedings feature the 23 papers given on a broad range of topics concerned with the neurologically handicapped child. To name but a few: reproducible judgments concerning health programs; problems in diagnosis of mildly brain-damaged children; and implications of research and program development in the western states. Jessie M. Bierman, M.D., was chairman of the institute's program committee. Available through the APHA Western Regional Office, 693 Sutter St., San Francisco 2, Calif., while supply lasts.

Voluntary Health Agencies Studied

A study to determine the "real and relative needs" of voluntary health agencies in Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio, was sponsored by the United Appeal, Academy of Medicine and United Community Council of the area under the auspices of a Citizens Committee. The actual study was undertaken in 1960 by a 14-member Expert Committee representing medicine, public health, business, labor and general community interests. The Expert Committee worked with staff of the Community Council. The study has now been reported to the Citizens Committee and to the boards of voluntary health agencies, and planning and appropriating groups in a publication entitled, "Study of Voluntary Health Agencies in Columbus and Franklin County, Ohio."

The theme throughout is that voluntary agencies constitute a public trust. Joint planning, common administrative services, and mutually developed service programs are stressed. Included are a review of local voluntary health agencies and of medical research needs, with major sections of the report being devoted to recommendations to voluntary health agency boards, individual agencies, and to the study sponsors.

The project staff collected a variety of data, not all of which has been included in the Expert Committee's report, covering such areas as community health resources. That material, if it had been used, might have related the activities of local voluntary agencies to those of basic governmental services in the community that are the responsibility of the local health department—a subject which it might well have been helpful to see explored in the report itself.

From United Community Council, 137 East State St., Columbus 15, Ohio, in limited supply; 75 cents.

Better Graduate Training in Safety

In November, 1961, the University of Michigan School of Public Health held a conference co-sponsored by the Association of Schools of Public Health, the Public Health Service, and the Children's Bureau on "Teaching Accident Prevention in Schools of Public Health."
Conferees who work in a wide variety of public health settings, most of them nonacademic, were invited to present working papers to help develop ideas about training public health personnel to undertake accident prevention programs, and to suggest desirable components of such training. Most of these papers and several special reports are included in the recently issued Conference Report, compiled by Dr. Johan Eliot. Much of the material will be of interest to many public health practitioners as well as to educators.

Among the authors of working papers are Dwight M. Bissell, M.D., who spoke on a local health department program in action; Fay M. Hemphill, Ph.D., who dealt with the application of evaluation technics in programs; Berwyn F. Mattison, M.D., who reviewed existing accident prevention programs in official health agencies; and Henry C. Steed, Jr., M.P.H., whose topic was the environmental approach to prevention. The Conference Report is available from the office of A. L. Chapman, M.D., Assistant Surgeon General, Chief, Division of Accident Prevention, Public Health Service, Washington 25, D. C.

Health Knowledge vis-a-vis Behavior

The final report of a four-year (1957-1961) household-interview study undertaken in Washington, D. C., by the Howard University Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health has been published in three mimeographed volumes under the general title, "Cultural Considerations in Changing Health Attitudes." Co-authors are Paul B. Cornely, M.D., and Stanley K. Bigman, M.A. Three hundred and ten Negro and 98 white families from comparable census tracts were interviewed.

From their specific findings, the authors cull a series of impressions circumscribed by certain limitations of the sample due to difficulties encountered in the interview process, particularly in reference to the white families. Authors' impressions include the following: While the Negro families lived in an area of apparent uniformity in income (low), their general population characteristics and health patterns varied widely; health was found of less importance to the families studied than other values, such as jobs; there was a striking absence of relationship between how much people knew about health and how much they did about it; actual services and goals of the health department and the department's public image were at considerable variance; in terms of impact on recipients, efforts in health education of the public over the past years had not been particularly effective; and while relatively unexplored as sites for effective health education, hospital or health department clinics may be the most strategic. Information on availability through the University's Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Washington 1, D. C. No price listed.

Chest Survey Methods Studied

A respiratory disease mass-screening pilot project was conducted in a densely populated residential-industrial section of Queens County, New York City, by the Queensboro Tuberculosis and Health Association and cooperating groups. "I'm Breathing Easy—How About You?" is the published report of the project which undertook in April, 1961, the screening of 12,511 residents and workers through 70mm chest photofluorograms, pulmonary function tests, and questionnaires. The aim of the study was "essentially to determine the acceptability to the public, and to the medical profession, as well as the validity for public health purposes, of adding pulmonary function studies to a routine chest x-ray survey for screening large numbers of adults for evidence of chest disease and disability."

Among the conclusions were: when
well-known principles of community organization are applied, the community will participate in mass screening; pulmonary function screening tests can detect pulmonary dysfunction not evident on routine minifilm and diagnostic chest x-ray alone; use of this equipment aided in discovering chest disease and disability, but slowed down the screening process by about 250 per cent and added about 20 cents per individual to the cost; perfection of pulmonary function screening techniques can help overcome a percentage of "false-negatives" and "false-positives"; and the largest yield of chest diseases and disability was from males 40 years of age and older. From QTBA, 159-29 90th Ave., Jamaica 32, N. Y.; single copies free; bulk quantities, $1 each.

"Occupational Disease in California"

Under this title the California State Department of Public Health has recently published a review for 1960. Based on 18,642 physician reports of occupational disease encountered in the total of nearly five million employees covered by workmen's compensation, the review points up universal problems in disease definition, report validity, and adequate population coverage. The data indicate that most of the reported diseases fell into the traditional categories of skin conditions, respiratory conditions, and systemic poisonings; poison oak, food products, and agricultural chemicals were most frequently implicated. Among all industry groups, agriculture had the highest incidence with ten reports per 1,000 workers; followed by construction, 6.2; and manufacturing, 5.1. The occupational disease rate for women in manufacturing (the only industry for which employment estimates by sex were available) was somewhat higher than for men. While 43,000 people (28,000 men, 15,000 women) of working age (15-64) die annually in California, only 240 deaths in 1960 were ascribed to occupational disease.

According to the compilers "The data in this report point to certain areas toward which study and preventive action should be directed. Some of these areas are important because of the large number of occupational disease cases, others because of their potentially great hazards to the individual, some because they represent new problems where study is needed, and still others because they reflect failure to apply satisfactorily the methods of prevention and control which are well understood and relatively simple to carry out."

From the department's Bureau of Health Education, 2151 Berkeley Way, Berkeley 4, Calif. Copies free while supply lasts.

Assesses Solid Wastes Study Needs

A special report, "Solid Wastes Research Needs," has been prepared for the Public Health Service by Robert D. Bugher, executive director of the American Public Works Association, following a series of meetings with public works and public health officials, engineers, and scientists. Specific research areas in the field of solid wastes storage, collection, and disposal methodology are delineated, and a broad program of basic and applied research is recommended to meet present needs. It is pointed out that the numerous health hazards attendant upon the solid wastes problem and the current annual expenditure by municipalities of over $1.5 billion for refuse collection and disposal services ("exceeded only by expenditures for schools and roads") call for far more financial support to the research needs in this field than is presently forthcoming. From the American Public Works Association, 1313 East 60th St., Chicago 37, Ill.; $3.