NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Psychogenic Death Rates

Psychogenic deaths are defined as those resulting from psychological causes. Knowing how a people die can tell a lot about how they live, according to researchers at the University of Rochester’s Management Research Center who have just completed a comparative study of psychogenic death rates in about 30 countries. The center’s study includes suicide, homicide, ulcers, cirrhosis of the liver, and hypertension.

It was found that countries with high homicide rates tend to have low suicide rates and vice versa. Examples are Mexico, where 18.7 out of every 100,000 people were murdered in 1966, while only 1.6 killed themselves; and West Germany, where only 1.3 murders per 100,000 were recorded in 1965, while 25 suicides occurred.

An important factor in whether a country is homicidal or suicidal is its level of labor force status integration, i.e. the degree of certainty among individuals about what society expects of them because of their age, sex, and so on. In rigid societies where roles are well defined and people have little freedom of choice in directing their lives, homicide rates are high. On the other hand, suicide rates tend to be high in societies where people have to choose their life styles from a great number of alternatives. Both suicide and ulcers may be considered “inward-directed” aggressive impulses, which also explains the high incidence of ulcer deaths in “suicidal” societies. (For further information, contact: James L. Clapp, Office of Public Information, University of Rochester, Rochester, N. Y. 14627.)

AMA Takes a New Look at Nurses

The AMA may soon ask that 50,000 to 75,000 nurses be permitted to practice medicine under the direction of a doctor. This is a historic departure for the association; in most hospitals, a nurse cannot give a patient an aspirin until a doctor comes along. Under the new plan, once a doctor has diagnosed a case, a specially trained nurse could then administer injections or care as advised by him.

To avoid the touchy question of the tolerance of physicians toward such competition, the AMA proposes that nurses work as employees of doctors. They would be paid on a fee-for-service basis that would give them professional status and considerably higher pay. The patient would receive a bill from the nurse for a shot, or other service, separate from the doctor’s bill. Although this change is not yet official, AMA officers have sounded out the American Hospital Association, and received strongly favorable reactions to the idea. (American Medical News, Jan. 12, 1970; 535 North Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. 60610.)

Number of Nurses Grows

The National League for Nursing reports a substantial increase in the number of men and women preparing for careers as registered nurses in the academic year 1968-69. Nursing school admissions to associate degree, baccalaureate degree, and diploma programs increased to 64,157, or 2,768 more than for the preceding 12 months. Graduations rose by 641 to a total of 42,196, while enrollments reached 150,795, compared to 145,588 the previous year.

There were 1,339 nursing education programs in October, 1969, a rise of 46 over 1968. The highest gain was in the rapidly growing junior and community college programs which increased by 60 during that period. There were 19 more baccalaureate programs in senior col-
leges and universities and 33 fewer hospital-based diploma programs. These figures reflect the continuing gradual movement of nursing education into institutions of higher education.

The league attributes the growing number of nursing students to the availability of federal funds for nursing education. However, the demand for nurses continues to outstrip the supply. In 1969 there were 680,000 registered nurses. An estimated one million will be needed by 1975 according to PHS. (National League for Nursing, Inc., 10 Columbus Circle, New York, N. Y. 10019.)

Will the Chiropractors Prevail?

At the 1969 Annual Meeting, the APHA adopted a resolution stating that: "It appears that the practice of chiropractic and naturopathy constitutes a hazard to the health and safety of our citizens." The AMA has long warned against chiropractic as a "hazard to rational health care." And a recent HEW study concluded that "Chiropractic theory and practice are not based upon the body of basic knowledge ... widely accepted by the scientific community," and that "the scope and quality of chiropractic education do not prepare the practitioner to make an adequate diagnosis and provide appropriate treatment."

So far, there is no provision under Medicare for the payment of chiropractic services, and HEW recommends that it not be covered by the program. Nevertheless, chiropractic's lobbyists are conducting an all-out campaign to change this situation. About 80 congressmen, flooded with mail supporting chiropractic have introduced legislation supporting chiropractic coverage under Medicare. The AMA's editorial comment: "If enacted (this legislation) would provide federal subsidies—and, in effect, federal sanctions—to an inferior theory and practice of care." (American Medical News, Jan., 1970: 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill. 60610.)

Handicapped Students Learn to Earn

In the Fullerton (Calif.) Union High School District handicapped youths are learning how to compete with nonhandicapped applicants for vocational jobs, thanks to the Project Worker program. Students watch carefully edited video tapes shot at local stores, shops, and factories to learn how employees perform on the job. Students also practice on equipment employees use, such as cash registers and lathes. Thus, they know how the job should be done before being hired, thereby eliminating a training period. Tapes are also made of the student learning the job—for viewing by the prospective employer. The program enables the youths to qualify for jobs with a degree of challenge. (California Association for Neurologically Handicapped Children, P. O. Box 604, Los Angeles, Calif. 90053.)

Student Health Leaders Meet

Leaders of the national student organizations of pharmacy, dentistry, medicine, and nursing recently met in Washington, D. C. for a four-day series of meetings sponsored by the Student American Pharmaceutical Association. A major topic of discussion was the National Coalition of Student Professionals, a recently formed interdisciplinary organization whose membership includes the American Institute of Architects, the Law Student Division of ABA, the National Student Nurses' Association, the Student AMA and the Student APHA.

The objectives of this newly formed organization are: (1) to increase communications between member organizations; (2) to develop effective channels of advisory input into governmental agencies; (3) to develop better service delivery models to reach a broader range of patients and clients; (4) to
develop and express student consensus on major social issues; (5) encourage greater interdisciplinary cooperation and interaction among students; (6) initiate interdisciplinary programs that will improve the student internship experience; (7) disseminate professional information; and (8) to encourage student participation in the development of relevant curricula.

The conference was partially funded by NIH, and NIH officials gave the students a preliminary briefing on the government agencies concerned with health care services. (The APhA Newsletter, Feb. 7, 1970; 2215 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D. C. 20037.)

Fluoridation: A Boon to the Aging

"The time may not be far off when there will be good evidence to indicate that the older person may have more to gain from fluoridation than the child. Not only will he have better teeth (his own) and thus be able to secure better nutrition in his old age, but he may also have stronger bones, less osteoporosis, and will be less likely to fracture should he have an accidental fall." This prophecy was made by Dr. Fredrick J. Stare, Harvard University nutritionist. A pathologist from New Britain, Conn., has further predicted that fluoridation may be a factor in prolonging life.

Studies have shown that two important degenerative processes of aging affecting bones and arteries appear to be considerably less prevalent among persons who drink water containing rather high concentrations of fluoride. A study, conducted by a team of Harvard University physicians in northwestern North Dakota, revealed that twice as many women in low-fluoride areas had decreased bone density, and two to six times as many showed collapsed vertebrae, compared with subjects in high-fluoride areas. An unexpected finding was a "striking difference" between the high- and low-fluoride areas in the number of calcified aortas in the men. Men living in the high-fluoride area had 40 per cent fewer calcified aortas, while the women showed a similar trend. The Harvard report corroborates earlier studies in this country and England. (Community Health, Winter 1969; Kansas State Department of Health, State Office Building, Topeka, Kans. 66612.)

PERSONALS

Moses Baskin† is now assistant director, Grasslands Hospital, Valhalla, N. Y. George R. Carpenter, M.D., M.P.H.,* has been appointed deputy secretary for local health, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Harrisburg.

Harold E. Codner, M.D., M.P.H.,† director, Division of Chronic Respiratory Diseases, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Harrisburg, has retired.

Morton C. Creditor, M.D.,† has been named executive director and program coordinator, Illinois Regional Medical Program, Chicago.

V. Terrell Davis, M.D.,* has been appointed mental health consultant in psychiatry, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, New York, N. Y.

Marvin J. Durrell,† formerly assistant administrator, Mount Sinai Hospital Services, City Hospital Center, Elmhurst, N. Y., has been appointed associate director, Clinical Services, Beth Israel Hospital, Boston, Mass.

Jack H. Engelmoehr, M.P.H.,* has been appointed executive director, White Plains Hospital, White Plains, N. Y.

Gordon Hanna, M.P.H.,* has been appointed supervisor, Health and Welfare Program, Michigan Civil Rights Commission, Detroit.

Kenneth Hanson,† Community Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, DHEW, Rockville, Md., has resigned. He is being replaced by Arthur G. Isack,† who will also continue as deputy director, Division of Health Standards.

Benjamin Mandel, Ph.D., has been appointed research professor of microbiology, New York University School of Medicine, New York, N. Y.

Miloslav Rechcigl, Jr., Ph.D.,† has been appointed special assistant for nutrition and

* Fellow.
† Member.
health. Office of the Director, Regional Medical Programs Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, PHS, Rockville, Md.

MILTON S. SASLAW, M.D., M.P.H.,* has been appointed director, Dade County Department of Public Health, Miami, Fla.

GILBERT M. SHIMMEL, Ed.D., M.P.H.,* formerly professor of health education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y., is now professor and director, Community Health Education Program, Institute of Health Sciences, Hunter College, City University of New York.

PROFESSOR ARTHUR C. STERN, M.S.,* has been elected president and board chairman, Triangle Universities Consortium on Air Pollution, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

PAUL R. TORRENS, M.D., M.P.H.,* formerly assistant director, St. Luke's Hospital Center, New York, N.Y., is now director, Maryknoll Hospital, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

JOHN C. VILLFORT,† has been appointed director, Bureau of Radiological Health, Environment Control Administration, Rockville, Md.

EVA G. WEISSMAN,† is now executive director, The Myasthenia Gravis Foundation, Inc., New York, N.Y.

R. J. ZABRANSKY, Ph.D.,† formerly consultant in microbiology, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minn., is now director, Division of Microbiology, Mount Sinai Hospital, Milwaukee, Wis. Dr. Zabransky is also assistant professor, Department of Microbiology, Marquette University School of Medicine, Milwaukee, Wis.

DEATHS

DAVID E. BIGWOOD, M.D.,* Onondaga (N.Y.) County Health Commissioner, on January 21 (Health Officers Section).

PROFESSOR GORDON M. FAIR,* former dean of engineering at Harvard University. Professor Fair was a 40-year Fellow of the Association (Engineering and Sanitation Section).

VERNON D. FOLTZ, M.S.,* Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kans., on September 15, 1969 (Laboratory Section).

WILLIAM H. MCMATH,† of Penndel, Pa., on August 22, 1969 (Engineering and Sanitation Section).

KNOX E. MILLER, M.D.,* of Jacksonville, Fla., on May 18, 1969. Dr. Miller was a 40-year Fellow of the Association (Health Officers Section).

MAURICE L. PETER, M.D., M.P.H., † director.

* Fellow.
† Member.

City-County Health Department, Oklahoma City, Okla., on September 29, 1969 (Health Officers Section).

COLONEL ADAM J. RAPALSKI, USA (Ret.),* Washington, D.C., on February 5 (Epidemiology Section).

EDWARD A. REISKE,* Berkeley, Calif., on August 6, 1969 (Engineering and Sanitation Section).

BRIAN RUSSELL, M.B., D.P.H.,† of Willowdale, Ont., Canada, on August 13, 1969 (Health Officers Section).

JOHN R. K. SMITH, M.D.,* Hammonton, N.J., on February 4 (Mental Health Section).

ARTHUR H. STEINHAUS, Ph.D.,* East Lansing, Mich., on February 8, 1970 (School Health Section).

JAMES G. TOWNSEND, M.D.,* Washington, D.C. Dr. Townsend was a 40-year Fellow of the Association (Occupational Health Section).

E. RICHARD WENNERMAN, M.D., M.P.H.,* professor of public health and medicine, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. Dr. Weinerman and his wife were killed in a SWISSAIR plane explosion on February 21 (Medical Care Section).

CONFERENCES AND DATES


State and Regional Public Health Meetings:


Indiana Public Health Association (First Symposium on Hazardous Chemicals—Handling and Disposal). Stouffer's Indianapolis Inn, Indianapolis. April 21-23.


Meetings of Other Organizations:

American Medical Association:
Association for Gnotobiota. Loubon Laboratory, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind. June 8-10.
International Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, Minneapolis, Minn. May 17-20.
International Congress of Hospital Engineering. Rome, Italy. May 11-16.
National Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association. Cleveland, Ohio. May 24-27.
Drug Metabolism in Man. Barbizon-Plaza Hotel, New York, N. Y. June 29-July 1.
Pan American Cancer Cytology Congress. Ocho Rios, Jamaica, B.W.I. May 30-June 1.

Purdue Industrial Waste Conference. Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. May 5-7.
Texas Water Pollution Control Association Conference. Houston, Tex. July 9-10.

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