

Small hospitals ability to face change, constraints discussed

Financial constraints and rapid technological change are forcing those responsible for the delivery of health care to re-think the role of the small hospital in terms of the current situation.

The subject was discussed at the Small Hospitals Forum at the OHA Convention. Panelists were R.J. McQueen, Executive Vice-President of Agnew, Peckham, Hospital Consultants; Professor Maureen Dixon of the Health Administration Program at the University of Toronto; A.H. Moses, Trustee of South Muskoka Memorial Hospital, Bracebridge; and H.R. Crewson, Executive Director of the Manitoba Health Organizations, Winnipeg. Alan Backley, Deputy Minister of Health for Ontario, was resource person on the panel.

Each member of the panel spoke from a different viewpoint, but all were agreed that small hospitals will not survive unless they are willing to adapt to change.

Mr. McQueen declared himself at the outset as a supporter of small hospitals because they encourage physicians to locate in the community, give a sense of physical security to local people and have such a

strong economic base to their operation. He went on to say, however, that when a small hospital tries to be all things to all people, it should be chopped back, or at least discouraged.

"It is not then serving the population properly and safely", he said.

"When the range of diagnostic equipment was limited, and bed rest with tender loving care constituted the major extent of treatment potential, the small hospital could fill most of the needs for the sick. But the constant advance of bio-medical engineering, linked with the growth of all aspects of medical sciences, has made the small unit less capable of handling the potential for diagnosis care and cure."

Mr. McQueen listed ambulance service, clinics and telemetry and said that any acceptable alternative to the hospital needs all three.

The clinic concept, he said, provides an alternative to much of the function of the current combination of doctor's office and small hospital. With what he called "one of the best ambulance systems in the world" and telemetry, Mr. McQueen said he believed

that the local clinic offers a viable alternative to some small hospitals. He added, however, that it needs the backup of medical technical and nursing staff, sophisticated equipment, good roads and a home care program.

A.H. Moses, giving a trustee's viewpoint, said that small hospitals in Ontario are here to stay - provided that they continue to serve their communities as they have in the past and provided that they develop their role as community health centres. Mr. Moses said that hospitals can no longer be crisis-oriented, but must reach out into their communities and educate the citizens to take care of themselves by staying healthy.

He suggested that hospitals should have a "sales" or rather an "anti-sales" department, whose job it is to keep people out of hospital.

"Just imagine a company with the investment in land, buildings and equipment of our average hospital, employing someone to go out and encourage people not to buy their product or use their services. The scope is absolutely awesome. Everyone is a prospect for this anti-sales campaign", he said. Mr.

Moses declared the name of the game, as he sees it, for small community hospitals, is to attack bad health habits "with all the hoopla and zeal of an old-time evangelist".

Professor Dixon, however, was pessimistic about the hospitals' ability to change public attitudes. "This change of emphasis at the local level is likely to be achievable only if it has enthusiastic support of the local community," she said.

"The experience here and in other countries suggests that the public still has to be persuaded of the benefits of the preventive approach."

She added that public scepticism could be justified, because there is little evidence to show that the current approaches to health promotion and illness prevention make any impact at all on individual behaviour.

Mr. Backley said that the ministry had discovered this to be the case. There is no proof, he said, that costly advertising campaigns aimed at changing lifestyles are effective. The ministry's own award-winning campaign "You Are Your Own Liquor Control Board" advertisements had not been proved successful.

H.A. Crewson described the District Health System operating in Manitoba. He said that under the system all the health and social service organizations in a given district are brought into one organizational structure and are forced to set common priorities. The District Health Board is composed of representatives of the boards of hospitals, nursing homes and other agencies.

One of the outcomes of this system, Mr. Crewson said, has been a reduction of acute-care beds in small hospitals.

"There has been a trade-off", he said. "Beds have been cut but no hospital has been closed."

Integration of services is being achieved in some communities by having a small acute-care hospital adjacent to the nursing home, and having home care services available.

During the discussion period one member of the audience asked the deputy minister what incentives there were for hospitals to move in new directions. Hospitals sometimes pay a financial penalty

for operating efficiently.

Mr. Backley stated that the only incentive is the hospital Board's desire to provide the best level of health services that the community can provide. He stressed that communities should find their own solutions and that this is one of the reasons District Health Councils are being set up. The ministry is opposed to one set solution for all areas - differences of geography make this impractical.

Professor Dixon, however, said she believed the only incentive for hospitals to change was authority. "It's not likely", she said, "that a community will press for preventive care at the expense of acute or other kinds of care."

She said that communities will not be prepared to accept less than the "best" unless they are forced to do so.

Mr. Backley reiterated that the future role of small hospitals will have to be examined closely. He stressed that it was not the government's intention simply to remove parts of the health care system.

the HERALD

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Bravo!

Residents of Halton Hills should be grateful for the work last week by town employees in recovering from what is considered the worst winter storm to strike the area in the past century.

Road crews worked diligently around the clock, stopping only when whiteouts and reduced visibility occurred.

By mid-day Friday most roads within town and certainly the highways through the municipality, were open and passable. Garbage collection carried on as normal Friday. Another unsung group who should be thanked publicly for their actions during the big storm are residents who opened their

doors to stranded motorists and the police who worked round the clock ensuring that no one was stranded in a snowdrift. It is actions such as this which restore faith in people, a quality which is not easy to find today, and provides a bond within the community which brings us together and makes us proud to live here.

It is said that you never know how good you have it until it is gone. That may be the case but the corollary is that bad times bring people closer together.

A case in point is the great blizzard which struck Thursday. All of a sudden nature unleashed her fury on us and there was little we could do but try to survive - that over-worked theme of Canadian literature. Power lines came down as did parts of buildings and the storm took its toll in human life and injury. In a word, traffic was impossible.

The only note of warmth in the entire story is how people came together during the crisis. This phenomenon is one well noted during a natural disaster and no doubt is a sign of our essential humanity. When a natural disaster strikes it is immediate. Postponing the dealing with it to hold a business meeting or go shopping or whatever is out of the question.

We'd like to salute everyone who took time out to help their fellow man whether in the line of duty or not.

Have a heart!

Great strides are made through small steps. That's why your Heart Fund Volunteer is willing to call on everyone in the community to receive their Heart Fund contributions.

When she walks up to your door, she'll be right in step with thousands of other volunteers throughout Canada, who are calling on their neighbours to enlist their support in the fight against heart disease.

Get in stride with the millions of other Canadians who are also contributing to the Heart Fund.

Give so more will live.

A feeling we are over-protected

By GERRY LANDSBOURG

The protected society - supposedly that's us. We have products that protect us against everything you can think of from unsightly dandruff, bad breath, body odor, wrinkled pantyhose, graying hair, ring around the collar to ring around the bath-tub for that matter.

We seem to have been offered every conceivable protection from our bodies and what we put on them. At the same time our bodies are protected to the maximum, we offer no protection whatsoever for our minds.

In this age of "information explosion" we are constantly being fed a steady diet of information and misinformation. This constant barrage of fashionable thoughts seems to go in cycles and creates what could be called "fashionable thought trends."

The media seems to latch on to a thought trend and for a given time period we are bombarded with views exposing the topic then comes a steady controversy of the pros and cons. Before you realize it the subject itself gains a certain acceptance if from nothing else than repetition and exposure.

From this steady barrage, this stream of information and misinformation the public has no protection whatsoever. The main reason for this is the difference between the public and the people.

We all know that people today are more informed and interested in the world around them, the public however can have anything at all put over them.

Take the LaMarsh Commission on violence for instance. The Ontario government commissioned the report for a cost of approximately \$2.2 million, however, Ontario has no clout whatsoever in effecting any changes of national scope that a federal

matter. A prime example of the child like acceptance of the public as opposed to the people.

Another case in point is the recent focus on homosexuals and their rights. "People" seem to feel that certain topics lack taste and belong to a school of thought that believes in privacy in the bedroom whether between heterosexual or homosexual parties.

"People" really don't seem to want bedroom antics of other people jumping out at them in print whether at the breakfast or the dinner table.

The public, however, has quite an appetite for the whole matter. The public seems to accept articles that people in conversation seem to find distasteful. The whole matter becomes quite confusing when one considers that the public can only be made up of people.

The Sunday Sun recently ran a story with a picture of Marie Robertson, an out-of-the-closet lesbian. Ms Robertson felt the world should know her story of anguish on how badly she wanted a child, and how she became artificially inseminated, the process involved, the miscarriage of the baby and the fact that she is definitely going to try again.

The story continues with all the intimate details of who, how, when, where and why. In this case the dangers were two homosexual male lovers helping out her and her female lover. How nice for them.

I personally can't imagine anything of a stranger aberration than two self-confessed homosexuals insisting on their right to parenthood.

I believe in the rights of people to find whatever happiness they can in this world. I believe in the amendment to the Criminal Code which allows homosexual acts between consenting adults in private.

Private is the big word, however, and when it's put in the family newspaper it's anything but private.

A child has enough of a challenge today when it's born into a heterosexual relationship. Why should any youngster be faced with a choice of sexuality?

We are told that conditioning and environment play a primary role in the development of a child - what kind of development can a child born into a lesbian relationship have? Picture the school situation, the minute word would leak out the child would lead a life of misery and ridicule - for what?

We talk a lot today of how far we have come sexually, yet the locker room talk of boys and (later on of men) remains the same - things don't change. I've yet to see a man who wanted a free and easy woman for a wife - a playmate, maybe - but not "his" wife. The same can be said of homosexual

relationships - they might be acknowledged more now but who do you know that wants to admit that her or his son or daughter is "gay".

What child should have to be subjected to such a life? Let us see immediate legislation opposing artificial insemination between homosexuals as a Criminal Act towards an unborn innocent child.

Why should a child pay for a parents' inability to function in a normal sexual relationship?

There are many "deserving" people who want children. Deserving is not the qualification. Heterosexual couples with a serious medical disorder have to forego the privilege of having a baby - in many cases a baby that would be loved dearly.

Any argument by a self confessed lesbian on the ground of "I wanted a baby very much" just doesn't hold water.

Looking through our files

30 YEARS AGO
Council approved the hiring of Charles Wilson as clerk-treasurer of Georgetown. Starting salary was set at \$2,000 annually.

Efforts were being made to find out the cost of chlorinating local water. The move was made after Halton medical officer of health Dr. Mather reported a survey of local water samples showed grade D readings.

Town works foreman Alf Collins presented a letter on behalf of salaried town workers seeking an increase in wages to offset the increased cost of living. Annual salaries ranged from \$1,365 to \$2,000.

Council offered \$400 to purchase about two acres of land at the lower end of John Street for a pumping station.

George Cleave, Esquing Township reeve, was elected warden of Halton County.

20 YEARS AGO
A head line on The Herald's front page reads, "Library Well Used Circulation Soaring." Librarian Rosemary Jordan reported that circulation for 1947 reached 2,561 books. The library has also been selected as one of 300 across Canada to receive from the James Richardson Century

We started out speaking about protection and the ironic protection that is available us - the superficial protection that we give ourselves while we allow anything at all to pass through our minds.

When an issue is presented often one gains acceptance. Our guideline for what normal is that which is accepted and tolerated.

In the near future we will have a device called "talk back television". A push button on your set will allow you to signal a personal response. This little button will change the whole structure of society as we know it today.

We will become a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Public plebiscite will be taken and the results tallied immediately. The time for the people and the public to become one is now - later will be just too late.

Writing phony communiques beats opening letters

By STEWART MacLEOD

Ottawa Bureau
Of the Herald

Really don't want to further upset Henry Tadeson, the former assistant commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who thinks it's time the media stopped "attacking" the force.

However, it's difficult to dwell for just a few moments on the latest revelations by Solicitor-General Francis Fox, who tells us about RCMP members writing one of those frightening FIQ communiques in 1971 and the force's headquarters not learning the source until a few weeks ago. Seems passing strange for a security service to operate this way.

I mean, it's one thing for a highly-trained RCMP officer to sit down and write that "Mao, the true revolutionary, teaches that power flows from the barrel of a gun," but it's quite another thing for the head of the security services not to know where the communique originated. For close to seven years, it was assumed in Ottawa that the communique came from the Minerva cell of the FLQ.

As the solicitor-general of the day, Jean Pierre Goyer, was never told the RCMP authored the revolutionary diatribe.

CLEAR SLATE
The revelation came out when Fox held an Ottawa press conference to - as he so delicately put it - "clear the slate" of known

RCMP wrong-doings. Rather than have various illegalities exposed by the drip-drip method, he thought it would be better to display the whole slate at once. And this included mentioning possible "physical or moral" violence against FLQ members who were questioned by RCMP security men for up to 12 hours in motel rooms.

"Quite honestly" said the minister, "it is not our intention to reveal the facts one by one. What we are trying to do this morning is clear the slate - to reveal all illegal acts that have been committed."

Earlier suggestions of illegalities had come out in dribs and drabs. The illegal break-in by police of a left-leaning news agency in Montreal was disclosed before it

was revealed that the Mounties had burned down a barn to prevent a meeting of Quebec terrorists and U.S. Black Panthers. And then, among other things, there was that bit about the RCMP intercepting and opening mail.

It has obviously been upsetting for Henry Tadeson who wants the media to lay off and let the McDonald Royal Commission, which is investigating the RCMP, complete its work in peace. As things now stand he says, the public is being left with the impression that the force's security service systematically breaks the law.

"There are no more dedicated people in this country," he says.

I certainly won't quarrel with that.

CAN'T IGNORE
On the other hand, there is little evidence that the media have attacked the RCMP, and even Tadeson could scarcely expect us to ignore Fox's news conference about the fake communique. I am sure the solicitor-general is correct in saying the communique was issued to sow seeds of discontent within the then-feared FLQ, but it says something for the RCMP's chain of command when headquarters was not informed about the fake.

Not only headquarters, but the Quebec Provincial Police also took it seriously, continuing the investigation with probably little real co-operation from the RCMP. This

will no doubt be a subject for the royal commission to pursue.

Meanwhile - and I hope Henry Tadeson will forgive me - it's difficult to erase the image of one of those clean-cut Regina-trained RCMP officers sitting down and penning this type of prose:

"Together the 'Minerva' cell and its supporters will continue to liberate the Quebec race from the oppression imposed by the Anglo-Saxon bourgeoisie and their marionettes in government and from all other enemies of our people. We will triumph."

Sure beats opening drab letters.



Everything is a priority

By DONO'HEARN

Life is a matter of priorities for us all. Example: Shall I buy another drink or save the money?

It is very much a matter of importance to government today.

There are so many demands on it - so much to be done.

And it can't possibly all be done.

There isn't the money for it all, so there must be decisions, constant decisions, on just what can be done.

What comes first. And what must be put to the side.

SPENDING NEEDED

There have to be doubts if government here genuinely appreciates this.

It recognizes the general fact that its spending must be cut back, therefore its restraint program.

But then the question is how much further does it go.

Does it realize that there must be more spending in some areas, even though there is overall restraint?

That, if there really is to be progress in meeting our problems of today, certain areas and activities must be encouraged, meaning largely that money must be spent on them?

The evidence isn't reassuring.

One has a firm suspicion that the government believes restraint is an end in itself and doesn't realize the further job it has to do.

SAVE \$17 MILLION

As one example the government today should be encouraging development, new development.

I have mentioned the importance of small business in this.

And what has the government done about small business? Practically nothing.

Perhaps a better example is energy, and particularly energy conservation.

There is one common piece of knowledge around here. This is that the Ministry of Energy has a particularly hard job in getting any money.

Yet it's a ministry of today. A ministry that is key to the particular conditions of today.

As just one instance of what can be done in this area there has been a government energy bus on the road now for some 26 months.

It has surveyed some 300 plants and has been able to identify possible annual savings of \$30 million for these plants, or 17 per cent of their consumption.

But even though it has been going now for more than two years and has proven itself this program still has only the one bus.

At its rate the plants in the province might be covered by about 2025. Yet industry consumes more than half of our energy.

The government has a Policy and Priorities Committee of cabinet.

Just what it does isn't certain. But a first task might be to look at its own priorities.

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