

Hospitals Conference - continued

He also went on to describe the functions and responsibilities of not only the local M.O.H. but also the Public Health Nurse and the Public Health Inspectors.

Engendering much reaction was the address given by Mr. Cornish. The Ministry of Community and Social Service was challenged to provide fuller information on its services, to obtain additional qualified field workers and to make their services more accessible than they are at present. Mr. Cornish recognized these problems and reported that a recent study by the Ministry made some key recommendations to alleviate some of these situations. One was a move towards a single field office for the various branches of this Ministry which would result in bringing many programs closer together - rather than operating in isolation of each other as is presently the case. These representatives will then be given considerable flexibility and independence in handling local problems and needs. Other important recommendations involve a decentralization of decision making from Queen's Park to various areas of the Province. Regionalization of the Ministry's functions to enhance decentralization of decision making and the integration and coordination of programs which would result in more effective relations within the Ministry enabling it to deliver services more effectively in conjunction with municipalities, community agencies (including hospitals), service clubs and charitable organizations.

Mrs. Remus stated that communities without a medical practitioner would be wise to consider building a clinic and home as an inducement to attract a physician. She described some existing funding methods to accomplish this. Mrs. Remus felt the community health centre was a good thing but in addition to medical services it should provide social services, home care, public health, housing placement officers and most important, an information officer whose duty it would be to know all the available services to be found in the community for the use of clients and staff.

Dr. Baldwin stressed the continuing need for hospital and other health agencies to obtain information about the needs of the communities, what services are available and not used and what services should be available. He stressed the importance of the consumers determining the needs - rather than professionals. He said that the concept of the District Health Council is designed to bring together representatives of the public, agencies in the health field and professionals to; identify needs, consider ways of meeting these needs, establ-

ish priorities and plan a comprehensive Health Care Program for the District.

Representing the hospitals reactions to statements made by the speakers was Mr. Don Beno, a Trustee of McCausland Hospital, Terrace Bay, Dr. S.S. Graham, Chief of Staff, Wilson Memorial Hospital; Marathon and Sister Miriam, Administrator, St. Joseph's Hospital, Elliot Lake.

The need for realistic plans for the north by Governments was stressed by Sister Miriam. This was coupled with a plea for much greater co-operation among hospitals to provide a much stronger voice to Governments and District Health Councils.

In her concluding statement Miss Hoffman said that small hospitals are now faced with a challenge to expand their roles. The Ministry of Health is moving us towards new initiatives in providing broader health and welfare services. "We must" she stated, "communicate with communities and learn more about their needs".

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