

The Midwife.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

By direction of the President of the Local Government Board a circular has been addressed by the Secretary of the Board bringing to the notice of County Councils (other than the L.C.C.) and of Sanitary Authorities, the provisions of the Maternity and Child Welfare Act, 1918, which has recently been passed. The circular states:—

The Act widens the powers of Local Authorities in the matter of maternity and child welfare. It enables them to make such arrangements as may be sanctioned by the Board for attending to the health of expectant mothers and nursing mothers and of children who have not attained the age of five years, and are not being educated in schools recognised by the Board of Education.

A Council exercising powers under the Act must appoint a Maternity and Child Welfare Committee. This Committee may be specially appointed for this purpose or may be an existing Committee or a sub-Committee of an existing Committee, and it must include at least two women. Subject to two-thirds of the members of the Committee being members of the Council, persons specially qualified by training or experience in subjects relating to health and maternity who are not members of the Council may be appointed as members of the Committee. A Committee appointed under the section may also appoint sub-committees consisting wholly or partly of members of the Committee. Mr. Haycs Fisher considers it is important that working women should be represented on the Committee. In seeking such representatives the local branches of working women's organisations or the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organisations, 33, Eccleston Square, London, S.W. 1, might usefully be consulted.

2. The Supreme importance of Maternity and Child Welfare work at the present time needs no emphasis. With a view to encouraging the provision of further services, which experience has shown would be of value for conserving infant lives and health, Mr. Haycs Fisher has obtained the sanction of the Treasury to a considerable extension of the scope of the Board's grant.

Regulations under which grants not exceeding one-half of approved net expenditure will be payable by the Local Government Board to Local Authorities and to Voluntary Agencies in respect of arrangements for attending to the health of expectant mothers and nursing mothers and of children under five years of age.

1. The Local Government Board will pay grants during each financial year, commencing on April 1st, in respect of the following services:—

(1) The salaries and expenses of Inspectors of Midwives.

- (2) The salaries and expenses of Health Visitors and Nurses engaged in Maternity and Child Welfare work.
- (3) The provision of a midwife for necessitous women in confinement and for areas which are insufficiently supplied with this service.
- (4) The provision, for necessitous women, of a doctor for illness connected with pregnancy and for aid during the period of confinement for mother and child.
- (5) The expenses of a Centre, *i.e.*, an institution providing any or all of the following activities: medical supervision and advice for expectant and nursing mothers, and for children under five years of age, and medical treatment at the Centre for cases needing it.
- (6) Arrangements for instruction in the general hygiene of maternity and childhood.
- (7) Hospital treatment provided or contracted for by Local Authorities for complicated cases of confinement or complications arising after parturition, or for cases in which a woman to be confined suffers from illness or deformity, or for cases of women who, in the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health, cannot with safety be confined in their homes or such other provision for securing proper conditions for the confinement of necessitous women as may be approved by the Medical Officer of Health.
- (8) Hospital treatment provided or contracted for by Local Authorities for children under treatment.
- (9) The cost of food provided for expectant mothers and nursing mothers and for children under five years of age, where such provision is certified by the Medical Officer of the Centre or by the Medical Officer of Health to be necessary and where the case is necessitous.
- (10) Expenses of crèches and day nurseries and of other arrangements for attending to the health of children under five years of age whose mothers go out to work.
- (11) The provision of accommodation in convalescent homes for nursing mothers and for children under five years of age.
- (12) The provision of homes and other arrangements for attending to the health of children of widowed, deserted and unmarried mothers, under five years of age.
- (13) Experimental work for the health of expectant and nursing mothers and of infants and children under five years of age carried out by Local Authorities or voluntary agencies with the approval of the Board.
- (14) Contributions by the Local Authority to voluntary institutions and agencies approved under the scheme.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)