

The Midwife.

CENTRAL MIDWIVES BOARD.

The following Memorandum has been issued by the Central Midwives Board, 1, Queen Anne's Gate Buildings, Westminster, London, S.W.1, to certified midwives.

ADVISORY MEMORANDUM AS TO THE DRUGS WHICH MAY PROPERLY BE CARRIED AND ADMINISTERED BY MIDWIVES.

1. It will be useful for the guidance of midwives if they are given some information concerning those drugs which the Central Midwives Board consider may reasonably be used by them in the course of their practice.

2. The list of drugs given below is not intended to be complete. No drug should be used by a midwife unless she has been thoroughly trained in its use and is familiar with its administration. This especially applies to opium and includes knowledge of the legal requirements of the Dangerous Drugs Regulations, which must be complied with.

3. Under the Regulations a midwife cannot obtain opium unless she has given notice of intention to practise to her Local Supervising Authority in accordance with the provisions of Section 10 of the Midwives Act, 1902, and she must enter in a book, to be kept for the sole purpose, particulars of all supplies obtained, including the date, quantity, and name and address of the person from whom obtained.

4. The midwife should remember that Rule E 19 of the Rules of the Central Midwives Board is as follows: "A midwife must note in her Register of Cases each occasion on which she is under the necessity of administering or applying in any way any drug other than a simple aperient, the name and dose of the drug and the time and cause of its administration or application."

5. The drugs in the list given below are arranged in two classes, viz., ordinary and special, and particular caution should be used in connection with all drugs in the special list.

Ordinary Drugs.

A.—APERIENTS.

A simple aperient, such as Castor Oil.

B.—ANTISEPTICS.

(1) *General*: such as Perchloride of Mercury, Biniodide of Mercury, Tincture of Iodine, Lysol.

(2) *For the Child's Eyes*: Boric Acid, Silver preparations such as Nitrate of Silver.

C.—STIMULANTS.

(1) *General*, such as Sal Volatile, Brandy.

(2) *Uterine*, such as Ergot (Liquid Extract or Ammoniated Tincture), Sulphate of Quinine.

D.—SEDATIVES.

Bromides: either Sodium, Potassium or Ammonium (often given together).

Special Drugs.

SEDATIVES.

(Remember Dangerous Drugs Regulations referred to earlier.)
Opium.

Tincture of Opium (Laudanum).

Dover's Powder (Pulvis Ipecacuanhæ co.)

Chloral Hydrate.

Syrup of Chloral.

COMPENSATION TO MIDWIVES.

The following letter has been addressed to the Clerk of the Council, or the Town Clerk of the Local Supervising Authorities under the Midwives Acts by direction of the Minister of Health:—

SIR,

1. I am directed by the Minister of Health to refer to Section 2 (1) of the Midwives and Maternity Homes Act, 1926, which provides that where a midwife has been suspended from practice in order to prevent the spread of infection she shall, if she was not herself in default, be entitled to recover from the Local Supervising Authority such amount by way of compensation for loss of practice as is reasonable in the circumstances of the case.

2. It has now been decided that the expenditure of Local Supervising Authorities for this purpose will be eligible for grant under the Maternity and Child Welfare Regulations, if the Minister is satisfied in each case that the compensation paid is reasonable. The Minister is advised that it is important in these cases that the suspension of a midwife should be for a period sufficiently long to ensure that there is no risk of the spread of infection, but that in the large majority of cases all that is necessary is to suspend the midwife until she has been efficiently disinfected. The prior consent of the Minister should be obtained to the amount of compensation proposed to be paid, if the period of suspension exceeds seven days.

3. As regards the basis on which compensation should be assessed, it appears to the Minister that normally this should be calculated by reference to the loss of income actually sustained by the midwife, and that the payment should not exceed the reasonable amounts paid by her to other midwives whom she has had to employ to attend such patients confined during her period of suspension as were actually entered in her books as having engaged her prior to the date of suspension.

4. It is recognised, however, that cases may occasionally arise in which it will be necessary to suspend a midwife for a prolonged period. Any such case will need to be dealt with by reference to the special circumstances, and the whole of the facts should be placed before the Minister before the Authority commit themselves to the payment of compensation.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. R. MACLACHLESS.

Assistant Secretary.

The Minister of Health has issued to local authorities copies of the Public Health (Condensed Milk) Amendment Regulations, 1927, and the Public Health (Dried Milk) Amendment Regulations, 1927.

The Goldsmiths Company have made a grant of £1,000 towards the fund which is being raised for the extension of Queen Charlotte's Maternity Hospital.

Lord Glendyne has given £1,000 to the Queen Charlotte's National Mother-Saving Campaign, the object of which is to provide special accommodation at Queen Charlotte's for puerperal fever and other diseases not suitable for treatment in general maternity wards, and at the same time to endow research into the causes of these diseases.

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