

THE BURNING QUESTION.

We hope later to refer further to the Address given by Miss Effie Taylor on "The Nurse Assistant" at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Hospital Matrons on July 8th, at St. Bartholomew's Hospital; in the meanwhile we reprint from *Public Health Nursing* "Suggestive Types of Supervision and List of Duties for Subsidiary Workers Under Nursing Agencies" in the United States of America, as it will be well for all concerned to realise the combination of domestic labour with the care of the sick which apparently appeals to those who control "subsidiary workers" across the Atlantic. We cannot imagine that our so-called Assistant Nurses in Great Britain will avail themselves in any numbers of this form of hard labour.

We invite our readers to study the suggestions in the following article.

SUBSIDIARY WORKERS IN NURSING AGENCIES.

SUGGESTED TYPES OF SUPERVISION OF SUBSIDIARY WORKERS PLACED THROUGH NURSING AGENCIES AND A LIST OF DUTIES FOR SUCH WORKERS.

These suggestions in regard to the supervision and the duties of subsidiary workers have been prepared by a sub-committee of the Joint Committee to Outline Principles and Policies for the Control of Subsidiary Workers in the Care of the Sick, of the three national nursing organisations, with the assistance of a committee appointed by the American Home Economics Association. The material has been approved by the boards of the three national nursing organisations (American Nurses' Association, National League of Nursing Education, and National Organisation for Public Health Nursing) for publication, with the understanding that the report is tentative and that criticisms and suggestions are invited.

The term *subsidiary workers* as used in this report includes all persons other than graduate, registered nurses, who are employed in the care of the sick, such as so-called practical nurses, attendants, nurses' aides, et cetera.

I. TYPES OF SUPERVISION.

A plan for the supervision of subsidiary workers placed through nursing agencies should include:

A. Selection*.

Workers should be selected in relation to the situations they are to meet and the services they will need to contribute for the relief of suffering and the restoration of normal conditions in the homes to which they are called. Some of the qualifications essential for the subsidiary worker are:

1. Good health (complete physical examination).
2. No serious physical handicap.
3. Willingness and ability to do housework.
4. Pleasing personality.
5. Understanding of limitations but enough self-confidence to give family confidence in her.
6. Attention to personal hygiene and neat, clean appearance.
7. Sympathetic understanding of problems of the family.
8. Sense of humour and ability to get along well with people but maintain dignity and avoid gossip.

B. Placement.

This is one of the most important of all the points in supervision. Things to be taken into consideration when placing a subsidiary worker are:

* Reprints of this report will be available. The committee is now giving attention to the problems of the preparation of these workers.

1. Type of situation.
2. Preparation of worker to meet the situation.
3. Personalities involved.
4. Religious prejudices, if any.
5. Racial prejudices, if any.

C. Introduction to the field.

When subsidiary workers are placed by nursing agencies, they should receive instruction as to policies of the agency and the procedures to be carried out by the worker. This can most effectively be given by an introductory period of from one week to ten days, including:

1. Lectures.
2. Demonstrations.
3. Discussion meetings.
 - a. Continued instruction by periodic group discussions of problems as they arise.
 - b. Discussion of individual cases with the supervisor upon her visit to the home.

The number of visits by the supervisor will depend upon the type of situation and the amount of guidance and help needed by the individual worker. A minimum of one visit for each place a worker is placed and additional visits as required for instruction in regard to new or special procedures is suggested.

D. Records.

1. Instruction in keeping records is given by the supervisor.
2. The supervisor makes use of records for the purpose of supervision.

II. DUTIES.

The following is a tentatively suggested list of duties for subsidiary workers in homes, where illness necessitates their employment:

A. Home management.

This may include assistance to the mother or house-keeper; direct charge of the home during illness in the absence of the mother; or teaching other members of the family—such as the daughter or son of suitable age, the husband, or a relative or friend—to assume at least partial responsibility for the care of the home.

The worker's duties will depend on the situation in the home.† The duties may include:

1. The care of well children, with special attention to their regular routine of rising, bathing, dressing, eating, playing, and attendance at school.
 - a. Cleanliness: Give baths or see that bathing is done if necessary.
 - b. Clothing: Dress the children or see that they are properly dressed according to the weather and their activities.
 - c. Activity: Direct the play of small children and the activities of older children as the situation demands.
 2. The planning of meals and the buying, preparing, and serving of food according to the needs and income of the family.
 3. The responsibility for the regular family routine including such household tasks as cleaning, ventilating, and keeping the house in order; airing and making beds; and washing dishes.
 4. Such washing, ironing, and mending of clothes as time permits and is necessary to keep the family presentable.
- #### B. The care of well infants. This may include:
1. Preparation of formulæ under the direction and super-

† Unless there is a special understanding between the subsidiary worker, the family, and the supervisor, the worker should not be expected to do such work as spring or fall house-cleaning; cleaning walls and windows; heavy laundry such as blankets and an unreasonable number of sheets or other heavy articles; making of garments; or doing the work in connection with parties for various members of the family.

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