

CENTRAL EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR THE NURSING PROFESSION.

The following circular letter has been issued from the Ministry of Health. It is instructive—as apparently “the Nursing Profession” as such is unrecognised.

SIR,

1. I am directed by the Minister of Health to state that he has been approached by the Central Emergency Committee for the Nursing Profession in regard to the local organisation which they considered it necessary to set up.

2. In their terms of reference the Committee were appointed to ascertain the nursing personnel available by collecting the numbers of nurses in the employment of hospitals and institutions and by compiling a register of all other nurses and assistant nurses and to compile a register of nursing auxiliaries.

3. It is clear that the Register must operate locally in emergency and as the Medical Officer of Health is normally in executive control of the arrangements for the recruiting and preliminary training of first aid personnel and of the organisation of first-aid posts, and is also in close touch with the organisation of casualty hospitals at which nurses and nursing auxiliaries would be employed, it would be appropriate that he should be directly associated with the arrangements for establishing and utilising the Register. The Minister would therefore be glad if the Council could arrange for the Medical Officer of Health to consider what is the most suitable local machinery for the purpose. In order to enlist the co-operation of the local interests concerned, it is desirable that a small committee (to be known as the Local Emergency Committee for the Nursing Profession) should be set up for the Council's area, including representatives of the hospitals and the medical profession, the local branch of the College of Nursing, the St. John's Ambulance Brigade, the Red Cross Society and the Women's Voluntary Services. If, as would be most convenient, the Medical Officer of Health is able to undertake the executive work involved, this committee would act towards him in an advisory capacity. But where this is not practicable it can no doubt be arranged that the local branch of one of the voluntary agencies shall carry out the executive work on behalf of the Local Emergency Committee.

It is requested that the Medical Officer of Health will convey his views on the local organisation, including his suggestions for the constitution of the Local Emergency Committee, to the Secretary, Central Emergency Committee for the Nursing Profession, Romney House, Marsham Street, London, S.W.1, as soon as possible.

4. The Central Emergency Committee will in due course supply a copy of the portions of the register relating to the area and will take steps to keep it up to date, and in this latter respect the local organisation would be particularly useful.

5. While the first task of the Central Emergency Committee is to establish a register of those who would form a nursing reserve in an emergency, it appears to the Minister that in order to make this reserve effective it should be organised into units, and receive collective training as such, under the general control of a central body, which would secure the necessary standardisation and co-ordination of training. He has decided to entrust this additional task to the Central Emergency Committee and to enlarge their terms of reference accordingly.

6. In preparing for national emergency the first organisations to supply the necessary auxiliaries for the reinforcement of the nursing profession must always be the St. John Ambulance Brigade and the British Red Cross Society, and it is desired to make the fullest use of the facilities which these bodies offer for organisation and

collective training. But the Minister is informed that there are other recruits who are willing and anxious to obtain the necessary instruction but, for one reason or another, are not prepared to join either of these well-established organisations. For them arrangements must be made and whilst their desire to serve the country in this way can be made known to the Central Committee, the sifting of candidates must be made locally, as must the actual arrangements for training. A scheme of training is being worked out by the Central Committee which will serve as a general guide, and the Committee will communicate with the Medical Officer of Health at a later date in regard to this.

7. An additional copy of this circular is being sent to the Medical Officer of Health.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. W. NEVILLE.

GLASGOW MEDICAL EXHIBITION.

APRIL 24th to 28th, 1939.

The British Oxygen Co., Ltd., exhibit will consist of a display of apparatus for the administration of all medical gases.

Oxygen Tents, Flowmeters, etc.

The timely use of oxygen has saved many lives and much unnecessary exhaustion: it is increasingly regarded not merely as an emergency stand-by but as a treatment to be employed long before the case has progressed to extremes. Among the latest apparatus for administering the Company's high-purity oxygen will be found a range of oxygen tents of the latest design. These enable such factors as concentration and temperature to be controlled to a degree not attained by any other method. A new and inexpensive flowmeter and humidifier will also be on view through which oxygen can be delivered in a condition of humidity, concentration and pressure suitable for inhalation.

Pipelines.

Many hospitals effect economies by the use of a pipeline. A patented device has just been introduced whereby in the case of damage by air raids or other causes the supply of gas is automatically cut off. This can be introduced into as many sections of the pipeline as is necessary so that one ward, floor or wing of a building only is cut off.

Oxygen Therapy Film.

Produced in conjunction with some of the leading authorities in the country, a film dealing with the latest techniques of the application of oxygen therapy will be shown. Shots have been taken in some of the well-known hospitals illustrating the use of oxygen tents, face masks and nasal catheters. Instruction is given on the correct handling of equipment and the advantages to be gained through correct technique. The film is also available for loan to Medical Schools, Nurses' Training Colleges, Hospitals and similar bodies.

Nitrous Oxide Apparatus.

The earliest and still one of the safest anaesthetics, nitrous oxide is manufactured and distributed by the British Oxygen Co. throughout the United Kingdom. Nitrous oxide, air and oxygen are administered by means of the well-known Wembley range of apparatus, the design and appearance of which have been improved. This also applies to the “Queen Charlotte's” apparatus for gas-air analgesia, which is specially designed for the use of midwives. These appliances are distinguished by extreme compactness and portability, the smaller models being made in suitcase form, and also by the absence of external tubes and gasbags.

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