

sickness remain matters within the discretion of the employing authority.

The Minister has accepted these further recommendations of the Committee, with effect from the date of publication of this circular, and commends them to employing authorities for adoption. He hopes thereby that women with nursing qualifications who are unable to give whole-time service on account of other ties may be encouraged to give part-time service; and that employing authorities in their turn will be encouraged to use the service thus made available.

He wishes, however, to make it clear that he has accepted the recommendation as to the provision of free transport where necessary, on the understanding that this will be provided only where there are unusual circumstances such as awkward hours of work, or in rural areas the absence of public transport, which make it impossible for the part-time staff to use normal means of transport, and where therefore it is necessary to make special arrangements for them.

Subject to this, the additional expenditure incurred in adopting the recommendations will rank in the usual way for the Exchequer grant which the Minister is prepared to make to employing authorities to assist them in giving effect to the Committee's proposals. It is a condition of payment of grant that employing authorities adopt in their entirety the agreed findings of the Committee and (where appropriate) of the Midwives' Salaries Committee and the Mental Nurses' Sub-Committee.

PAYMENT OF PART-TIME MENTAL NURSES.

Supplementary Recommendations of the Mental Nurses' Sub-Committee.

The Mental Nurses Sub-Committee recommend that a nurse who performs part-time duties only should be paid as follows:—

(a) If employed for more than 30 hours per week, the nurse should be paid at a rate 12½ per cent. in excess of the mean of the non-resident salary scale for the grade (including the appropriate living-out allowance). The payment should be for hours worked *pro rata* to a 48-hour week, which, for the purpose of this recommendation, is regarded as full-time service. This gives typical hourly rates as follows:—

Female Ward Sister, 3s. per hour; Female Deputy Sister, 2s. 6d. per hour; Female Staff Nurse, 2s. 3d. per hour; Female Nursing Assistant, Class I, 2s. per hour; Female Temporary War Emergency Nurse (over 21), 1s. 10d. per hour.

(b) If regularly employed for not more than 30 hours per week but required, on occasion, to work for a few hours in excess of 30, the nurse should be paid for the first 30 hours on the basis of (a) above, but for the hours in excess of 30 she should be paid on the same basis without the 12½ per cent. loading. This gives typical hourly rates as follows:—

Female Ward Sister, 2s. 8d.; Female Deputy Sister, 2s. 2d.; Female Staff Nurse, 2s.; Female Nursing Assistant, Class I, 1s. 10d.; Female Temporary War Emergency Nurse (over 21), 1s. 7d.

(c) If regularly employed for more than 30 hours per week, the nurse should be paid, *pro rata*, on the (non-resident) salary scale recommended by the Sub-Committee for the grade, a week of 48 hours again being regarded as whole-time duty. In determining the point of entry into the scale, the employing authority should take account of the nurse's previous continuous service in the grade, as in the case of whole-time employees.

The Sub-Committee have further recommended that employing authorities shall supply free meals whilst on duty for all part-time staff, shall provide uniform and launder it free of charge, and shall provide free transport where necessary. Questions of payment during holiday

and sickness remain matters within the discretion of the employing authority.

The Minister of Health has accepted these further recommendations of the Sub-Committee, and commends them to employing authorities for adoption. The Minister hopes thereby that women with mental nursing qualifications who are unable to give whole-time service on account of other ties may be encouraged to give part-time service; and that employing authorities in their turn will be encouraged to use the service thus made available.

He wishes, however, to make it clear that he has accepted the recommendation as to the provision of free transport where necessary, on the understanding that this will be provided only where there are unusual circumstances such as awkward hours of work, or in rural areas the absence of public transport, which make it impossible for the part-time staff to use normal means of transport, and where therefore it is necessary to make special arrangements for them.

Subject to this, the additional expenditure incurred in adopting the recommendations will rank in the usual way for the Exchequer grant which the Minister is prepared to give to employing authorities to assist them in giving effect to the Sub-Committee's proposals. It is a condition of payment of grant that employing authorities adopt in their entirety the agreed findings of the Committee and (where appropriate) of the Nurses' Salaries Committee and the Midwives Salaries Committee.

WELFARE OF THE BLIND.

HOME TEACHING AND VISITING.

It is stated that the Minister of Health has had under consideration certain recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Welfare of the Blind in regard to the appointment of Home Teachers.

A regular and comprehensive service of home teaching and visiting is, of course, an essential and valuable part of any scheme for the welfare of the blind, and the Home Teachers are an indispensable link between the blind people and the Local Authorities or Voluntary Agencies acting on their behalf.

Ability to appraise the special needs of individual blind persons and to determine the most beneficial and expeditious way of meeting those needs requires personal qualifications of a high order, and the Minister is in agreement with the Advisory Committee in feeling that, as the majority of blind persons to be visited are past middle life, the Home Teachers should be of an age to invite their confidence in discussing the problems to be solved. He, therefore, endorses the Committee's recommendation that, unless there are special circumstances to warrant an exception being made, the minimum age for the appointment of Home Teachers should be not less than 25 years.

The Committee also point out that the service is of such a varied and indefinable nature that the suitability of an applicant cannot in most cases be assessed without observation of the applicant's work over a period of time, and the Minister approves the Committee's recommendation of a probationary period of one year before the appointment is made permanent.

The Minister is in general agreement with the Committee's recommendation that encouragement should be given where practicable to the appointment of blind persons as Home Teachers where they possess the necessary qualifications and are otherwise suitable. Attention has been drawn to the fact that, in the majority of advertisements for Home Teachers, it is specified that sighted persons only should apply. Unless, however, there is special reason for such a limitation, the Committee considers, and the Minister agrees, that both blind and sighted persons should be given opportunities to apply for such posts.

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