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NEWS Letter

NEW MEXICO MEDICAL SOCIETY • 211 First National Bank • Albuquerque, New Mexico

AUGUST 16, 1962

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Secretary of the New Mexico Board of Medical Examiners last week received a letter from the Administrator of a hospital in New Mexico presenting a problem which may become more serious with the passage of time.

The hospital administrator enclosed a copy of a letter from one of the recently created M.D.'s from California. This gentleman is applying for staff membership and is a graduate of the Kirksville College of Osteopathy and Surgery. He had, according to osteopathic standards, many years of training, including an internship in an osteopathic hospital in Oklahoma, two years of surgical residency in the same State. He now states that he has been granted the M.D. degree from the California College of Medicine which, he rightly points out, is an approved medical school.

The question which the hospital administrator asks is, can the individual described above be licensed as an M.D. in New Mexico and, if so, would he then be considered by the State as any other M.D.?

The Secretary of the Board of Medical Examiners was able to answer the above question quite easily. In order to obtain a license to practice medicine in New Mexico the candidate must be a graduate of a school of medicine approved by the American Medical Association, Council on Medical Education and Hospitals and by the Association of American Medical Colleges. In spite of the fact that the candidate for membership on the hospital staff has been presented with an M.D. degree by the California College of Medicine he is by no means a "graduate" of an approved medical school. In the first place, the medical school was not approved when he received his education and in the second place the dictionary definition of graduate is, "one who has received a degree or diploma on completing a course of study as in a university, college or school".

Not by the wildest flight of imagination could the above mentioned osteopath be said to have completed a course of study in an approved medical school. The decision as to whether he can be licensed as an osteopath in New Mexico rests with the Board of Osteopathic Examiners. He certainly cannot be licensed as an M.D. and the hospital administrator has been so informed.

Many Boards of Medical Examiners are deeply disturbed by the

recent action of the California College of Medicine in handing out indiscriminately some 2,000 M.D. degrees to osteopaths. Some have questioned the legality of such an M.D. degree but to date it has not been formally contested. According to certain officials of the American Osteopathic Association this action would pose no problem to other states as no one would want to leave California. This is patently a silly statement and the predicted exodus has already begun.

We are not sufficiently familiar with the details of the laws of the other 49 states to know how many of them will have to recognize this new type of M.D. degree but it is conceivable that it will be recognized by several states. While in New Mexico these "M.D.'s" cannot be granted licenses to practice medicine it is perfectly possible for them to be given permits to practice in our state institutions and to work in clinics and hospitals run by corporations. This might well do much to lower our standards.

By allowing the 2,000 osteopaths to be presented with M.D. degrees of such questionable worth one cannot help but question whether California and the American Medical Association have performed a service in the interest of professional standards.

In these days when we hear practically nothing but criticism of our State Hospitals I am particularly pleased that I am able to praise one of them, namely, the Carrie Tingley Hospital for Crippled Children in Truth or Consequences.

For several years Dr. James S. Miles, Associate Professor and Head of the Division of Orthopedics at the University of Colorado Medical Center has been intensely interested in the Carrie Tingley Hospital. After Dr. Minear resigned as Chief Surgeon Dr. Miles was instrumental in maintaining the approved residency program.

But alas, some two or three years ago the Hospital fell upon evil days. Approval of the residency program was withdrawn and for a few weeks the institution was even without a Chief Surgeon. But thanks to Dr. Miles and others this situation was promptly corrected and, as will be seen from what follows, Carrie Tingley Hospital is now better than ever with an approved residency program even stronger than before.

Last month I had the pleasure of talking to Dr. Miles at considerable

length. He took great pains to tell me that the New Mexico Medical Society and the entire State can now be proud of Carrie Tingley. Furthermore after he returned to Denver he was nice enough to confirm his statements in a letter from which I shall quote: "I would appreciate it if you would inform the New Mexico Medical Society of the excellent situation which now exists at the Carrie Tingley Hospital. Thanks to the efforts of a number of New Mexico doctors, the hospital is now functioning at a very high level. Dr. McKay is an excellent choice for the Chief Surgeon. He has the treatment program for children functioning at a very high level. In addition he is meeting a lot of the clinics about the State providing a level of care which has not been achieved for many years. The teaching program is progressing very satisfactorily. Evidence for this is the interest demonstrated by the New Mexico Orthopedists and their willingness to serve as consultants. In addition, a medical advisory committee of the highest quality has been appointed and this has made some very important recommendations to the hospital. Mr. Carter (Phil Carter, Administrator) has renovated the physical plant of the hospital and has worked very well with Dr. McKay. All in all, the hospital seems to be in its best condition in the many years that I have known it. It is an institution of which the State of New Mexico and the Medical Profession may be very proud."

For the benefit of those who have not been familiar with Carrie Tingley Hospital recently it might be of interest to elaborate on Dr. Miles's remarks concerning the organization of the consulting committees. First there is the National Medical Advisory Committee consisting of Drs. Frank Stinchfield, New York, President of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons; Vernon Luck, Los Angeles, Past President of the Academy; and Harold Scofield, Chicago, also a Past President of the Academy. This committee of distinguished orthopedic surgeons meets annually, at the time of the meeting of the Academy, to discuss the problems of the Hospital with the regional and local committees. In addition they are available for consultation when necessary at other times of the year.

Secondly there is the regional Consulting Advisory Committee made up of Drs. James Miles of Denver, Louis Breck of El Paso and James Lewis of Phoenix. This committee, being geographically more conveniently situated, is available for direct assistance more frequently than is the National Committee.

Thirdly there is a State Committee consisting of Drs. John Boyd, Albuquerque, William Westen, Santa Fe, and Lewis Overton, Albuquerque. This committee meets several times a year and in addition one of its members spends from

one to two days monthly in consultation at the Hospital.

Mr. Phil Carter, the administrator, has recently resigned to accept a position at the Los Lunas Training School and Hospital. But it is my understanding that the Hospital Board is making a determined effort to obtain another trained hospital administrator to replace Mr. Carter. For many years authorities in other states have considered that the job of running hospitals should be in the hands of professional, trained hospital administrators. It is indeed gratifying that the Board of the Carrie Tingley Hospital has adopted this viewpoint.

On behalf of the New Mexico Medical Society I wish to thank all of the members of the Advisory Committee who are contributing so much of their time and ability to the Carrie Tingley Hospital. Particularly I wish to thank Dr. Miles for his kind words and for giving me the opportunity of passing on his good news to the New Mexico Medical Society.

We are pleased that there is more good news to report this month from another state institution which is making great progress as will be seen from the following news article. This was contributed by Mr. E.E.F. von Helms, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Los Lunas Hospital and Training School.

The Board of Directors has asked your President to extend to all members of the New Mexico Medical Society a cordial invitation to be present at the dedication ceremonies of the Diagnostic and Rehabilitation Center of the Los Lunas Hospital and Training School on September 26, 1962, at 3:00 PM. The speakers will be Governor Mechem, the President of the New Mexico Medical Society and Dr. Warren T. Brown of the Professional Advisory Committee who has given long and devoted service to the institution.

The Los Lunas Hospital and Training School was founded in 1927 when the Legislature voted an annual appropriation of \$37,500. The institution was formally opened in 1929 when Dillon Hall was constructed.

Progress was exceedingly slow until, during the superintendency of the late Hyman Bashein, M.D. (1956-1959) the drive for a really adequately planned and staffed institution got under way. When present plans are completed New Mexico will possess a hospital and training school of which its citizens can be rightly proud. For those who have not visited at Los Lunas within the last year the changes that have taken place will be striking. Instead of the familiar drab and depressing architectural jumble, the visitor will find handsome pink brick

buildings, the beginning of overall landscaping, and a general impression of cheerfulness and color.

The New Mexico Legislature has provided \$1,500,000 in Severance Tax funds for the first stage of expansion, and to this the Federal Government has added \$624,000 under the provisions of the Hill-Burton Act. The need for further expansion and adequate staffing is urgent. The present capacity of the institution is 234 beds; at the completion of the first stage of expansion there will be room for about 500 - however, reliable estimates place the number of mentally retarded in need of care, treatment and rehabilitation within New Mexico at between 1800 and 2000.

R.C. Derbyshire, M.D., President, NMMS

STATEWIDE The Council directed
SABIN POLIO our Public Health Com-
VACCINATIONS mittee, Hugh B. Woodward,
M.D., Chairman, to im-
plement a program of oral polio vacci-
nation through county societies of the
State.

Each county society has been urged to develop a community Sabin oral polio vaccination program beginning with the formation of a steering committee which is expected to plan and conduct the community campaign.

The Public Health Committee will assist each community program as much as possible. The services of Toppino-Golden Agency have been retained to handle public relations, publicity and coordination of the Statewide program.

The Public Health Committee is being helped immeasurably by the State Immunization Steering Committee which is composed of representatives of groups who are interested in the Sabin Poliomyelitis Vaccination Program.

The State was divided into three geographic areas and an attempt has been made to encourage each community to plan its SOS (Sabin Oral Sunday) program on established dates of the region which contains the source of its communications media. Twenty counties responded with the decision to have their SOS on September 23rd. Two counties will begin on October 28, and five in January. A few societies have not reported.

The goal of the New Mexico Medical Society is to have 80% of the population inoculated against polio and eliminate the carrier reservoir. This is a gigantic effort of the Society and your assistance is urged.

IRS CODE The reason the Internal
NUMBER Revenue Service is ask-
ing physicians if they
have a Social Security Number is
because they have converted to a
machine computing system for book-
keeping income tax returns and
collections and Social Security
Numbers are used for coding purposes.
In the event you do not have an S.S.
number, which is the case for many
physicians, IRS will assign a code
number.

DOWN BUT Medicine and its many
NOT OUT allies defeated the
Anderson-Javits pro-
posal on 7/17/62, however, Senator
Anderson has introduced S 3565,
which is the final form of the de-
feated amendment. Purpose in intro-
ducing the bill is merely to present
in a single package the health care
proposal under social security. This
bill will be the basic proposal in
the next Congress, and will be the
bill that JFK says he will take to
the people this fall.

The battle was won, but the war
is still raging on all sides.

The fact that 15 members of the
25 member Ways and Means Committee
were opposed to the King-Anderson
Bill was common knowledge. These 10
Republicans and 5 Demos. refused to
be pressured into a vote change. Of
primary concern to Medicine is the
composition of future W. & M. Com-
mittees. Since June we have lost 2
of the 5 Democratic votes on this
Committee - one defeated and one re-
tiring. Thus, the vote now is 13 to
10. Is there anyone so naive to be-
lieve that two conservative Democrats
will be appointed as replacements?
A 13 to 12 vote in this Committee is
too close for comfort.

Some Senators have been frank in
stating that they are for social
security financing of health care for
the aged now that their political
debts have been paid.

Senate Bill 3565 will be won or
lost at the general election, Nov. 6.
If sufficient law-makers are elected
who favor this type of legislation,
then the war is over and you have
lost. Thinking and talking politics
for the next five months should be
your avocation.

The present administration was
badly bruised over their defeat, how-
ever, they are a sincerely determin-
ed group who are scheming daily. They
were set down but they were not put
out.

STANDARD INSURANCE CLAIM FORM ORDER BLANK

New Mexico Medical Society
211 First National Bank Building
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Please send me _____ tablets @ \$1.75 each. Check for _____ enclosed.