INSTITUTES OF MEDICAL STUDIES IN THE U.S.S.R.

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The provision of facilities enabling physicians to undertake advanced studies to improve their theoretical knowledge and practical qualifications is an important part of the public health system of the U.S.S.R. In the Soviet Union the advanced training institutes for physicians at the hospitals, polyclinics, maternity homes, maternity and child-welfare centres, and medical educational institutions are under the central authority of the State, which organizes and finances them.

The Soviet Government has issued a number of decrees on advanced medical studies. After every 3 to 5 years' work in the provinces every physician has the right to advanced training at State expense. During training he continues to draw his pay from his place of employment. The doctors attending the courses are provided with living quarters and all other conditions ensuring effective study.

Before the October revolution in 1917 Russia had only one institute for advanced medical studies. It was in St. Petersburg, and very few physicians could afford the cost of studying there. Only 9,906 physicians graduated from the institute in the 32 years of its existence (from 1885 to 1917), but in 25 years of Soviet power over 37,000 physicians graduated from it—that is, 1,500 a year, or five times as many as before the revolution.

The Soviet Government opened ten similar institutes in Moscow, Kazan, Kiev, Kharkov, Odessa, Minsk, Novosibirsk, Tashkent, Tbilisi, and Baku. The largest is the Central Institute, in Moscow, founded in 1930. Over 52,000 physicians have graduated from it in the 18 years of its existence—an average of 3,000 a year.

There are two systems of raising the qualifications of physicians: (1) Specialization—that is, learning a new medical specialty; and (2) advanced training, when the specialist gains further knowledge of an already acquired specialty. The course for advanced training used to be of 2 to 3 months' duration, but now it has been prolonged to 4–6 months and in some cases to 12 months.

This course covers the main branches of medicine—such as therapy, surgery, paediatrics—and also special subjects such as endocrinology, helminthology, laboratory testing, diet, remedial physical culture, and so on.

Physicians can improve their qualifications in various branches of medical science, including patho-physiology, pathological anatomy, and other theoretical disciplines.

The Central Institute

The Central Institute of Advanced Medical Studies has 49 chairs distributed among the three faculties of surgery, therapy, and sanitary hygiene. The teaching staff includes seven members of the Academy of Medical Sciences, six corresponding members, 43 doctors of medicine, and 111 masters of science (medicine).

The major clinics of the Central Institute are in the Botkin Hospital, the largest in Moscow. The chairs of theoretical subjects and of hygiene, such as epidemiology, microbiology, communal hygiene, food, and industrial hygiene, are part of the Institute's organization. The chair of public health is of special importance. The task of this department is to train skilled administrators and organizers of the public health service. The training course is 12 months.

The Institute maintains contact with its graduates through the consultation bureau, which advises them on various theoretical and practical subjects. Hundreds of physicians in the provinces are engaged in scientific work under the guidance of the Institute. In the second half of 1948 alone twenty physicians defended their theses on material received from the Institute.

The serial publications, *A Practical Physician's Library*, issued by the Institute and consisting of a number of monographs on problems of theory and practice, serve as an important means of contact between the physicians and the Institute. The Institute has its publishing house, which issued 40 books in about 500,000 copies in the last two years. It also has a library with 70,000 volumes.

The Central Institute sends its teachers out to various places. Some teams have already visited the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian, Byelorussian, Central Asian, and Transcaucasian Republics.

One of the most important tasks of the Institute is training postgraduate students and housemen in all the medical branches represented at the Institute. This course of training is three years.

The five-year plan of the Ministry of Health envisages advanced training and specialization for most physicians. The major part of the plan will be carried out by the Central Institute of Advanced Medical Studies in Moscow.

LEBANON HOSPITAL FOR MENTAL DISEASES

The 50th annual meeting of the Lebanon Hospital for Mental Diseases was held in London on June 15, with Mr. H. Lyn Harris, chairman of the general committee, presiding. The history of the hospital and its background was sketched by Mr. Albert Hourani, who gave a vivid picture of the primitive Lebanon of fifty years ago as compared with the modern republic. The hospital itself had shared in these changes. From being a place for the segregation of the mentally afflicted, and then a place for their treatment and relief, it had become a centre of demonstration, experiment, and training for work in mental diseases in the Middle East.

Dr. J. Tylor Fox, on behalf of the medical director, Dr. R. B. Robertson, presented the medical report. There were 454 patients admitted during 1948 and 375 discharged, both figures showing an increase of some 120 on the previous year; 320 patients were now in residence. Electric convulsion therapy was used during the year in 171 cases, chiefly of schizophrenia and affective psychoses, with recovery in 70, relief in 41, and temporary relief in 28. Prefrontal leucotomy had been undertaken by Dr. Jidijan, of the American University at Beirut, on two patients. This was believed to be the first time the operation had been performed in the Middle East. One interesting and important departure was the setting up of an out-patient neuropsychiatric clinic at Beirut. Dr. Tylor Fox said that the turnover of the hospital for its size was larger than that of any mental hospital in England. In physical treatment and in occupational therapy it was a pioneer in its part of the world. Four-year medical students from the American University went there for training in psychiatry. Even such a modern feature as the hospital club for staff and patients had been instituted. Short addresses were given by other sympathizers with the work, including the minister of the Swiss Church in London.

ROYAL SOCIETY OF MEDICINE NEW HONORARY FELLOWS

Sir Henry Dale, O.M., who was re-elected for a second year as President of the Royal Society of Medicine at the annual meeting of the Society on July 5, presented on the same occasion diplomas to five newly elected honorary Fellows.

In making the presentation to Sir Ernest Rock Carling he referred to his innumerable activities, especially on the Radium Commission and the King Edward's Hospital Fund, and described him as a distinguished surgeon, a great servant of the community, and a valued counsellor in the Society. Dr. Brock Chisholm he greeted as a Canadian and as one who by virtue of high international office was charged with great responsibility for the co-ordination of medical activities over a large part of the world. He was most fittingly the first Director-General of the World Health Organization. The next