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CALIFORNIA REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAMS • AREA V

STROKE REHABILITATION IN AREA V

Joan Mitchell, R.N., B.S., one of the first Stroke Rehabilitation Nurses to be trained by the AREA V Stroke Program, recently presented AREA V with an interesting report of her experiences during her first 16 months spent as the Rehabilitation Nurse at Community Hospital of San Gabriel. AREA V provides the six-week training course, and continued consultation for the graduates of the Stroke Program, but each participating hospital designs its own rehabilitation program. Mrs. Mitchell notes, "The Stroke Committee met on June 30, 1970 for the purpose of meeting the Rehab Nurse. My role was defined as a consultant who would set up the liaison between the patient and all personnel who cared for him, with the special responsibility of helping to upgrade the stroke patient's care."

Mrs. Mitchell launched an inservice training program, teaching range of joint motion, transfer techniques, ambulation, positioning and night care of patients to the nursing personnel at Community Hospital; she gives each new class of student nurses a course on restorative nursing, and makes herself available for consultation on any patient problems student nurses may have. She gives 20-minute "mini conferences" twice weekly to present current information on various medical subjects pertinent to helping nurses care for stroke patients; and conducts workshops in nursing care plans for supervisors, as well as weekly classes on nursing care plans and team nursing for nurse personnel.

Mrs. Mitchell instituted classes and conferences at nearby extended care facilities, helping them get rehabilitation units started, planning and holding classes on care of stroke patients. When she discovered that some nursing personnel in the convalescent hospitals perceived her interest as merely "checking up on them" Mrs. Mitchell decided to have a workshop to gain their confidence and cooperation and in September of 1970, all the Directors of Nurses and their Assistants from convalescent hospitals in the immediate area were invited to attend the all-day session. Inservice classes for the nurses' aides at these facilities were also offered. The Program featured as

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speakers, in addition to Mrs. Mitchell, Robert H. Pudenz, MD, Stroke Chairman of AREA V, Dr. David Maline, Neurosurgeon and Chairman of the Stroke Program at Community Hospital, Mary Longerich, Ph.D., speech pathologist and consultant to Orthopaedic Hospital of Los Angeles.

Between October of 1970 and October of 1971, Mrs. Mitchell worked with 115 patients, on whom she has maintained a profile from which can be learned such facts as: the greatest number of the 115 patients (62) were in the 70-90 age group, with the next highest (32) in the 60-70 bracket. The sex of the patients was 67% male, 33% female. A large percentage of the patients had more than one symptom upon admission, with 53% having heart problems. Length of hospital stay varied from 3 hours to 76 days, the average being 13 days. The mortality rate was 21%. The discharge chart shows that 36% of the patients went home, 48% to convalescent hospitals.

Through the efforts of Mrs. Mitchell and members of the staff of Community Hospital, a Stroke Club has been started to help the families of stroke patients through the sharing of experiences and problems. To help the patient, Mrs. Mitchell--with strong support from Mrs. Irene Hardie, RN, PHN, Executive Director of the Visiting Nurse Assn. of Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley--is trying to start an activity center where stroke patients might come for a couple of hours each week for a program of games, crafts, and socializing. Mrs. Mitchell says, "The stroke patient needs to regain his dignity as a meaningful member of his family and his community." The center, ideally located in a recreation center somewhere in the San Gabriel Valley, would be under the direction of a program coordinator who would use volunteers recruited and trained as her helpers, and who would act as liaison between the in-patient facility and the community. "The center would provide the stroke patient with opportunities for experiences that would enable him to regain confidence and respect for himself despite the presence of physical disabilities or language disorders."

Of her numerous activities on behalf of the stroke patient, Mrs. Mitchell says modestly, "We feel that we are making progress in improving the status of the stroke patient in the hospital and convalescent home."

Other Stroke Rehabilitation Liaison Nurses, trained in the AREA V Stroke Program, are: Mrs. Dorothy Gale, RN (Presbyterian Inter-Community Hospital of Whittier) who appears in the AREA V brochure; Miss Cynthia Cohen, RN, (Midway Hospital); Mrs. Gail Olsen, RN (Inter-Community Hospital of Covina); and Mrs. Pauline Geogenton, RN (Huntington Memorial Hospital, Pasadena).

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NHSC REPS VISIT AREA V

Lloyd Clayton of the Community Assistance Branch, National Health Service Corps (NHSC) spoke to AREA V staff on Feb. 16 about the work of the National Health Service Corps, a unit within HSMHA of the U.S. Public Health Service which has been authorized to assign personnel to areas where health services are inadequate because of critical shortages of health workers. Mr. Clayton was accompanied by Dr. Bernard E. Schatz, of the Community Health Service, HSMHA, San Francisco. Also present were Mrs. Martha Tripp, Executive Director of the Community Planning Council, Pasadena-Foothill Area, and Jose Duarte of the ELA Health Task Force. Later, on Feb. 16, accompanied by Clyde E. Madden, Asst. Coordinator, Community Programs for AREA V, Mr. Clayton and Dr. Schatz were guests of the regular monthly luncheon meeting of the Antelope Valley Health Planning Council, in Lancaster. Following the meeting, at the request of the Family Service Assn. of Antelope Valley, the Sun Village-Littlerock area of Antelope Valley was visited. Residents of the area, with the assistance of the Association, have indicated an interest in possible NHSC assistance.

While in AREA V, arrangements were made for NHSC staff to meet also with representatives of the L. A. County Health Department, EYOA, Model Cities, Mexican American United of Santa Clarita Valley, and L.A. County Department of Hospitals.

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WORKSHOPS FOR MEDICAL LIBRARIANS OFFERED

Two one-day workshops on the organization and management of a small medical library have been organized and are to be offered on Feb. 24 and March 7 under the joint sponsorship of AREA V, the Pacific Southwest Regional Medical Library Service (PSRMLS), Los Angeles County Medical Association Library, and Norris Medical Library, USC. The workshops are a direct response to the needs indicated at the series of meetings held throughout the area in 1970 and 1971, by John M. Connor, Chairman of the Consulting Panel for Libraries, AREA V, and John S. Lloyd, Ph.D., Asst. Coordinator, AREA V. The survey was conducted in preparation for the medical information project proposal which was not funded. The need for training of non-professional library assistants on duty in hospitals remained, however, and Mr. Connor reports a full class of 26 signed up for the Feb. 24 session, to be held in Norris Medical Library, with another 31 registered for the March 7 class at LACMA Library. Identical programs will be presented on both days by the faculty which includes: Nelson Gilman, and Ruth Monahan of Norris Medical Library, Mrs. Phyllis Mirsky and Mrs. Betsey Beamish of the Biomedical Library, UCLA, Mrs. Lois Ann Colaianni of Area IV RMP Medical Information Communications Service, and John M. Connor, Head Librarian of LACMA Library.

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