



OFFICE OF  
MEDICAL OFFICER IN CHARGE

*Mr. Sear*

ADAMS, M

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

UNITED STATES  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

Oct. 13.1919.

To. Surgeon General,  
U.S.P.H.SERVICE,  
Washington., D.C.

Attention Miss Lucy Minniegerode

Sir, (thru Medical Officer in Charge)

For some weeks we have been under a great strain at this hospital, due to the lack of discipline and the lack of authority to in any way restrain patients. I have not written before in regard to this matter, because I felt conditions might be improved.

We have, as you know, Psychoneuroses cases, but that seems to embody so many varieties of cases that this hospital is far worse than an insane hospital could be. We have dope-fiends, dementia praecox, Epilepsy, hysteria in all forms; men who drink and are made crazy by liquor; those with violent tempers etc etc.

Dr Kolb, our Medical Officer in Charge, is not allowed to enforce discipline or to restrain the patients in any way. The result is that the patients are running this hospital and we have absolutely no come back.

We have had numerous nights of trouble with patients, but last night things reached a climax, and I am enclosing a copy of the night report, which will give you some idea of what we must put up with.

The obscene language, insults etc, that the nurses receive from time to time and especially the night force, are such that I have taken my nurses off night duty, and refuse to put them on again until the discipline of this place is such that I consider it safe and advisable to do so.

Every nurse I have feels exactly as I do in this matter of necessity of discipline and restraint for patients, and unless the conditions change in a very short time we will feel obliged to ask for a transfer or release from duty here.

You say in your letter to my nurse, Miss Woods, that "no nurse should have fear of patients, and certainly not those sent to this U.S.P.H.S. Hospital".

I cannot agree with you, knowing the class of patients here, and I feel very certain you would feel the same as we do - no protection, no come-back, no discipline, no restraint. It is very necessary to enforce the strictest discipline and restraint for some of these patients.



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continuation :-

The Commanding Officer of this Institution must be given absolute authority to discipline these men and restrain them at all times if necessary.

My nurses, who have received part or all of their training with the insane, say there is no comparison, and they, like the rest, live in constant fear of these men. I do wish you could make a trip out here, for I want you to be absolutely certain that I am correct in my statements.

This place has such wonderful possibilities, I would like to make it all you desire, but some very radical changes must be made at once.

Hoping this matter can have your immediate attention,

I am,

Very sincerely

*Mabel K. Adams*

Mabel K. Adams  
Chief Nurse.