

the publicity service, working with the advisory groups on the particular studies.

As facts are given point, they should immediately be translated into words and pictures that the man in the street can understand, and broadcast to all concerned. Here is where the publicity man's bag of tricks comes in handy. He can help write up the study in series of newspaper stories, magazine articles, lectures and radio talks and popular reports. He can arrange speaking programs, conferences, mass meetings and exhibits where the public can see and hear what the study is all about. The research bureau may carry on, in addition, a more continuous program of interpretation through its own bulletin, display material of maps and charts and informational service.

Now as for the fourth and last point of this paper: How can recommendations for changes be implemented? This is essentially a problem of fact-applying. I suspect that one reason why so many of our studies meet such untimely deaths is that social workers are not as thoroughly trained in scientific fact-applying as their compeers in other professions. Chief responsibility for seeing that recommended changes are accomplished should rest upon those who can measure political imponderables, see the human factors, pull strings and know the tactical moves necessary for getting a program across—that is, the administrators in so-

cial work, the control and executive personnel. The research bureau obviously cannot claim competence in this area, for there is a big difference between making butter and spreading it.

For all that, the research bureau is not without some responsibility here. It can facilitate and promote favorable action, first of all, by operating as an integral part of the community planning apparatus, functionally as well as organically relating itself to the planning and administrative sections. The importance of this from the standpoint of implementation is that it would bring research into the stream of planning business, making it more vital and purposeful, and assure immediate use of its output. Other ways that the bureau can help along the program of action is by drawing the most influential lay people into participation in the study, helping direct promotional and interpretational programs where they can be of most good and indicating the most effective points of the case for changes. Still other methods which the research bureau can employ profitably include incorporating proposed changes in subsequent related studies when applicable, periodically checking up the findings and indicating where revisions in recommendations are necessary on account of changed conditions and periodically calling attention of planning and administrative units to recommendations not yet in effect.

Coordinated Case Work Services

FUNCTIONAL REALIGNMENTS IN JEWISH CASE WORK SERVICE

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THE past three decades in the history of social work have witnessed a development from the simple form of general case working service to a highly differentiated system of specialized groups and now, in increasing measure, back to a generic program. Social case work has attempted to adjust its form and content in accordance with varying philosophies and attitudes towards those in need, as well as to the growth in the acceptance of it by other professions and community influences and programs.

It must be understood that social case work is not only increasingly becoming a separate discipline with a separate body of knowledge and practice, but before all and above all is a way of life—a method of knowing and doing things—the value of which is being increasingly appreciated by other practitioners in the broad field of human relations. Social case work has, therefore, not only received much of its content from other disciplines, but has also contributed a great deal toward their more efficient functioning.

The subject under discussion derives importance not only from the point of view of the content of social work, but also from its community organization aspect. The two are necessarily related, the answer to the second depending in large measure on an understanding of the first. I say largely because there are other factors which will contribute much toward the method and direction which coordination will take in the field of social case work as well as the speed with which

it will be brought about. The tide in this direction is running strong because the reasons behind it are so compelling that the burden of proof is unquestionably upon those that may oppose it as to why it should not come about.

Viewed historically, specialism in social case work developed not so much because of any conscious, intrinsic or professional consideration of the values attaching to a division of labor, but rather as the product, first, of a splitting off of lay members of the community in terms of their interest in special groups of the population, such as children, widows, the aged, etc., and, secondly, the attachment to institutional programs set up primarily for other purposes, but in which the value of social case work came to be recognized, as in the law, medicine, psychiatry, education, and industry.

Such rationalizations as to the values of specialism, have come, as the word implies, after the fact. They seek either to maintain the status quo in order to protect the vested interests of either the layman or the professional, or both. Or they are based on certain superficial analogies, particularly with medicine. They have also arisen as an outgrowth of the increasing complexities of urban life.

Social case work, however, is already a specialism within the field of social work, and to break it down still further is to ignore its basic components. It would be a waste of the time of such a group as this for me to labor the fact that today the skills required of the social case worker,

regardless of the field, are much the same. Whatever may have been the reasons during the recent past for requiring additional training, for example, in the psychiatric approach in certain agencies, these no longer hold. With the growth in appreciation of mental mechanisms there developed a multiplicity of agencies and personnel, placing special emphasis on this aspect of need. Following the rather general infiltration of this approach, there has come a lessening in its concentration in special agencies and a rapid spread to all forms of case working agencies. Earlier it was felt that to care for a particular problem, or need, or group, a separate organization must be set up, and with it went the explanation that these different problems, needs and groups demanded special forms of treatment, all of which was stimulated by the ability of each set of sponsors to raise funds for these separate purposes. There was a tendency to overlook their basic unity. What resulted was a social rather than a professional specialization, one that grew out of public interest in categories of persons or conditions and not always on the professionally considered need for differentiation in approach. Today, particularly in private social case work, schools of social work recognize this in their curricula, and private agencies of the better grade accept it as a *sine qua non* in engaging their personnel. Basically, therefore, there is no difference between the grade and training of case workers whether they be so-called family case workers, or child care workers, or psychiatric case workers, or any other type of case workers. Case work agencies have a common client, a common problem, a common approach, and offer a common service.

The considered conclusion of the Milford Conference Report, namely: that the

"outstanding fact is that the problem of social case work and the equipment of the social case workers are fundamentally the same for all fields. In other words, in any discussion of problems, concepts, scientific knowledge, or methods, generic social case work is our common field to which the specific forms of case work are merely incidental" is still as applicable today as it was in 1929. Indeed, it is the increasing acceptance of this fundamental principle which has given impetus to the present movement for coordination. Added to this intrinsic factor are the extrinsic pressures which are compelling social workers everywhere to reconsider the alignment of case working agencies. These are: 1. the demand for a unified professional approach to the treatment of various forms of social pathology; 2. the desirability of more efficient administrative procedures; 3. the growing program of public services which is forcing a reconsideration of the place of private social work in the community, and 4. the constriction of necessary funds for maintaining private social work.

Two major considerations point to the reasonable forecast of an increasing number of consolidations: first, that they are professionally valid and therefore desirable; and, secondly, whether we like it or not, the outlook for a lessening of private funds with increasing taxation will make them all the more necessary if the essential services now being provided are to be maintained. Whether or not, in the long run, the present need for raising private funds for relief will be rendered less necessary by a rising standard of public relief and other social services included in the Social Security program remains to be seen. There also remains for future determination whether funds presently given for relief will be given for more

constructive services. There is no doubt that the latter will be necessary if private social work is to advance its program for individual and communal well-being.

The Pittsburgh experiment in the coordination of case work services is less than five months old, so there can be nothing more said on this occasion than to explain why and how it was brought about, and how it is attempting to function on both the lay and professional sides.

Prior to January 1, 1937, the Pittsburgh Federation included five case working agencies—a family agency, a Big Brother Association, a girls' service bureau, a child placement organization, and a service to the foreign born. The impetus for their merger came originally from the Social Study, a community-wide survey paid for by the Buhl Foundation of Pittsburgh. The Federation, in addition to the general study of its work, paid for a special survey of its case working services, and following receipt and study of the report assumed, as part of its coordinating and community planning function, the initiative in bringing about the merger. Both the report and its own review of the findings revealed overlapping and duplication of function, artificialities of distinction, and vagueness in areas of service, with consequent difficulty in inter-agency relationships and the usual quarrels and recriminations between the general and specialized agencies—in short, most of the difficulties that exist in every community where a number of case working agencies are dealing with the same clientele. The Pittsburgh situation was no worse and in many respects probably better than similar conditions elsewhere, and presented an opportunity through merger for the improvement of service to the community and staff morale that was ripe for achievement.

The largest of the five groups was the family agency with a staff of thirteen professional persons; the other four combined totaled ten. There were, therefore, evident gains to be had from an administrative point of view. Coordination through a central intake process had at one stage been considered, but was finally discarded as not meeting the heart of the problem, namely, the overcoming of separate agency prerogatives, the insistence upon which had contributed a great deal to whatever difficulty existed.

With the combination of personnel, it was considered that there would be greater opportunity for raising the general level of performance. Unevenness in equipment and training is more difficult to overcome in a series of small units than it is in an agency of the size created through the merger. Improvement in service was the greatest single selling point in convincing all parties concerned, and was considered of sufficient importance to gain consent to spending more money for personnel under the merger than in the several agencies separately. Naturally, the expectation of the rank and file of board members was that merging would save money. Therefore, it did not facilitate the effectuation of the proposal, involving as it did a larger budget for personnel. It was a cardinal point in the discussion, however, repeated over and over again, that unless the merger was to be something more than a mere physical combination without definite provision for improvement of the general level of performance, that the merger had better be deferred.

Our plan involves something far more important than a mere combination of forces and elimination of petty grievances between agencies. It was conceived as an attempt at an integrated, synthesized case

work service, not as a group of departments under single control; in other words, a truly generic agency in every sense of the term. The program involves the utilization of specialized knowledge both through supervisors and consultants as well as through the use of special interests and abilities within the field staff, while expecting the latter to deal with any and all problems developing within the family. It does not discard specialism but makes use of it through the medium of the generic case worker who synthesizes all of the special skills in case work and presents a unified communal approach to the client and his problems.

It is our belief that specialisms as they exist for the most part today in social case work are distinguished first, either by a specialized knowledge of the content or procedures of other institutions or disciplines to which the worker is attached, or in which he does most of his work, but which specialized bit of knowledge is neither so great nor so deep but it can be easily and quickly learned by any competent case worker; or second, by not much more than a limited area of service with an opportunity to do an intensive job on a smaller number of cases strictly defined in the conditions of their selection. Assuming a competent and well trained staff, the crux of the matter consists largely in the size of the case load.

The specialized agency does not find its warrant through its ability to command the best trained talent and facilities. All areas of social case work are seeking and gradually acquiring such personnel, and, having procured it, would be equally competent to render the highest grade of service no matter in what field, special or generic. It is poor community planning which makes available to one agency the opportunity to do a good piece of work

and withholds it from another. Nor can the specialized agency justify itself on the ground that a restricted piece of work produces necessarily a better result. In another connection, I have discussed the difficulties in evaluating the results of social case work¹. Unfortunately, we labor with human material susceptible of neither exact definition, measurement, diagnosis or treatment, nor do we possess the criteria for judgment as to cause and effect. The validity of a good deal of what we are doing must be taken on faith. Many factors, some already mentioned, enter into the determination of what shall be our approach and none can say that the generic is any less exact and efficient because of its seeming generality than the specialized. It simply cannot be proved.

The development of the Pittsburgh plan being still in its infancy, it is necessarily far from complete. Pending the gradual generalizing of staff equipment we are making use of joint supervision as, for example, in the area of child placement. The former head of the foster home agency not only is supervising a number of workers, but also is called into consultation in all cases where placement is either remotely indicated or actually planned. The previous individual services are not only being continued, but are being extended. The program of case work with delinquents and pre-delinquents is being supplemented and extended into the delinquency-prevention field on a community organization basis. Not only are we cooperating actively with general efforts in this area, but special study is being made of the problem with particular reference to Jewish children and their use of leisure time facilities, especially in those

1. The Evaluation of Juvenile Courts and Clinics, by Dr. Henry B. Elkind and Dr. Maurice Taylor, in *The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. V., No. 3, July 1935.

districts where the Jewish population is highly concentrated. Similar extensions of service are taking place in the development and discovery of foster homes and in the care of transients.

Planning of the actual process of merger involving bookkeeping, records, combination and transfer of cases, assignments of workers to supervisors and a host of other details was handled on a cooperative basis, in conjunction with the executives of the separate agencies, for several weeks prior to January 1, when it actually went into effect. Many changes have been made since then in the light of accumulating experience, and it is expected that the same process will continue as long as necessary. In every phase of the experiment a flexible attitude is being maintained. Testing of the ultimate validity of the program remains for the future. All that can be said at this time on the technical side is that previous differences and difficulties incident to agency specialism have disappeared. Fundamental study of the case work program is now in process, all of which may cause further basic changes. Whatever may be the outcome, it is fair to say that possibilities for progress in this direction have been greatly enhanced because of merger.

Redistribution of case loads has been held up as much as possible, in order not to complicate the initial process. Intake is naturally being dealt with centrally, and first applications of the new program are found here. A certain amount of reassignment of cases has taken place. For example, most of the cases previously handled jointly have been assigned to one worker. Foster home cases, formerly the responsibility of a staff of two persons, are now being supervised by thirteen members of the staff. The need for keeping two or more workers abreast of the sever-

al aspects of a single case in order to avoid duplications or conflict of plan and treatment has disappeared with consequent satisfactions, that I am sure are evident.

The real challenge, to my mind, is not on the side of the technician's program, but on the lay aspect. How to minimize the loss of lay interest is the question. There is nothing holy about the form of an agency. The highest ideal of technical perfection which will not retain a sufficient body of community interest may find itself without any field within which to operate. Why is private social work so worried about interpretation today? Now that public social services are occupying the center of the stage, we who are up-stage, in more than one sense, may find ourselves off-stage unless we can convince our audience that our part in the play is worthy of support. Likewise, unless we are able to convince the community that some of our more esoteric and recondite excursions in case work practice are at least as valid as some of the simple and homely tasks which some would like to ignore and the consequences of labor upon which were easier to see, we may some day face a reckoning that may give us some anxious moments. In other words, any program of social work that does not carry its supporting public with it and behind it (but not too far behind) cannot hope for long to prosper.

Mergers generally select representatives from component groups as the new board of management. The Pittsburgh merger, as a compromise, is attempting, in its first stages, the difficult task of keeping everyone in that was in before. For the time being, no one is dropped. We have a board of some 125 persons, but the reality situation is not as difficult as it sounds. An executive committee of thirty-three appointed on a representative basis for

to be trained as well as to be a foster case worker

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the first year is the real governing board. The full board must meet no less than three times a year. Each previous board continues to operate as a so-called functional committee, one on family welfare and relief, one on child care and adoption, one on problems of boys, one on girls, and the fifth on the problems of the foreign born. This also was a compromise for the first year. Changes are definitely planned in the direction of a redistribution of these memberships in order to broaden the knowledge of each to include an awareness of the problems of the others. As it is, it has already been possible by the present arrangement to educate these committees by the presentation of material illustrative of the fact that problems are common to all. Matters of policy and legislation falling within each sphere are first brought to the appropriate committee for discussion and recommendation, and to the executive committee for final action. While it presents the aspect of a seven-ring circus it does present an unusual opportunity for keeping a large number acquainted with what is going on. Other means, such as a bulletin gotten out by a staff committee, also are employed.

An analysis of the problems affecting the members of all families in the case load was used to show each committee how its responsibilities, instead of being narrowed by the merger, have in effect been considerably broadened. For example, on December 31, 1936, when the existence of the boys' agency and the girls' agency as separate units terminated, each had between fifty and sixty cases open. The analysis of the combined case load, however, showed that there were nearly 200 cases in which there were problems of boys and a similar number of cases of girls calling for service. In other words, as we all know, and which fact

was used in arguing the validity of the merger, the family agency was dealing with more children's problems than the children's agencies themselves.

By keeping the case load down it is expected that attention to the problem of the child will not be diluted but rather intensified on account of the merger. If the family agency may be accused of inattention to the problems of the child, so may the children's agencies be equally deficient in their concentration on the adult. A one-sided approach on either count is not to be defended, and it is a prime purpose of the consolidation to afford a well-balanced and well-rounded program of attention to all factors in the family situation, no one of which can be focused upon without neglecting the other and without a biased, lopsided and inadequate result. Whatever may be the client's needs, he has, above all, the need of being regarded as a whole man, the product of a complex of concurrently interacting forces of heredity and environment. A myopic approach to a seeming special need, which tends to disregard his general situation and his position as a member of a family and general community group, may be both unrealistic and unscientific.

The general problems involved in such a merger are always complicated by others unique to the particular community in which it is being worked out, and that is certainly true in Pittsburgh. However, it is an interesting and stimulating job—one, if successfully managed, that should certainly point the way to others who are thinking of doing the same thing. If specialized agencies have any professional validity at all in the case work field, it is because they are consciously experimenting with different groups and methods, with a view to making the results of their experiments available to us all.

THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY AGENCY IN A COORDINATED CASE WORK PROGRAM

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ANY discussion of the merging of case work services must consider the reiteration of the generic nature of case work. It should be emphasized again, what has so often been said before, that the techniques, and the methods and the group served by the family agency are no different than those of any other case work agency. What is perhaps different is their program—their function. A rather cursory survey of the available literature, and a personal view of several years of family agency experience, make me doubt seriously whether that function is changing sufficiently to warrant this paper.

Several reports that have been made, both of Jewish and non-sectarian agencies, have brought out very strikingly that the private family agency has the same program now that was articulated as long as fifty or sixty years ago. The Smith College Study published in December 1935, which is concerned with eight agencies, amongst them at least two which have been extremely articulate on their "new" emphasis, summarizes its findings in part as follows:

"In general, it seemed likely that the family agencies in 1934 had as clients people from much the same social level as before the depression (although most of them were poorer now), that they were sought for much the same sorts of service, and that the assistance they gave touched much the same problem areas . . . Except for the relief aspect of the work, it could almost be said that the family agencies were carrying on their accustomed function. The popular con-

ception of the family agency's function is not wholly wrong, then. What is more nearly new in family case work and what the public probably does not clearly understand is the case worker's attitude and method of approach to family problems and her recognition that often more than money is needed to effect an adjustment."

What, then, is this traditional function which has continued with so little change? According to the statement accepted by the Jewish family agencies at the Philadelphia Assembly, "The main body of their work was and is with the rehabilitation of families and individuals. Their method was and is case work. At the same time, their participation in the general community program, as it relates to the public welfare, has been traditional. They have recognized their responsibility to bear witness out of their experience on proposals for social legislation and other public welfare action. When the depression created a need immeasurably beyond any they had met, they realized that nothing less than public, tax-supported measures could cope with this need in Jewish as in other families; and so they were active in the agitation for the creation of such public relief."

In this paragraph is indicated the most decided change in the Jewish family agency program, namely: the fact that it is no longer the source of relief for the whole Jewish group, and that in this respect it has assumed a supplementary relationship to the public relief program. It would seem unnecessary at this time to discuss this point any longer, but from