

The Department on its part has ever recognized that local government—if efficient—is in the best interests of this country.

For the most part, the Boards have adhered to the policy outlined by the Department with regard to the establishment and management of their institutions.

10. In the larger hospital districts each Board is provided with—

- (a.) *A Base Hospital.*—This hospital is the centre of the Board's activities. The Board meetings are held in its immediate neighbourhood. It is thoroughly equipped in every department and provided with an adequate medical and nursing staff. The Medical Superintendent of the base hospital is in the position of supervisor of all the other institutions under the control of the Board, and makes periodical visits of inspection; and the Matron of the base hospital also exercises a similar supervision as regards her special department, and arranges for the staffing of the various institutions of the district with an adequate supply of trained nurses and probationers. Moreover, the base hospital is the training-school for nurses, and probationers are drafted therefrom for service in the various institutions, returning to the base hospital to complete their training. By this means it has been possible to make the best use of the clinical material for training purposes, and, what is of more importance, to limit the number of training-schools, many of the smaller hospitals not having sufficient beds for that purpose.
- (b.) *An Infectious-diseases Hospital.*—This is generally in the immediate neighbourhood of the base hospital, and is under the same medical and nursing administration. The smaller hospitals are also provided with isolation wards.
- (c.) *Annexes or Wards for Consumptive Patients in Curable and Incurable Stages.*—Most of our hospitals are provided with such annexes, where consumptive patients in the early stages can be treated pending admission to a sanatorium. These annexes or wards are also used for patients in the more advanced stages of the disease.
- (d.) *A Consumptive Sanatorium.*—Only three of our larger Boards are provided with these institutions, the smaller districts combining for their equipment and upkeep. To these institutions are sent cases in the early stages of consumption who have been treated in the hospital annexes referred to above. There is also a sanatorium, with sixty beds, under the entire control of the Department.
- (e.) *Incipient Mental Wards.*—It is hoped that each of our larger base hospitals will shortly be provided with wards for early mental cases in whom there is a prospect of cure, and, by this means, the patients saved the stigma attaching to persons who have been treated in duly recognized mental hospitals.
- (f.) *An Old People's Home.*—Most districts are provided with these institutions, the smaller districts combining with the larger for the purpose. Here are received the aged poor (of both sexes) of the district.
- (g.) Attached to the Old People's Home is a *Chronic Ward.*—In these wards are received all chronic and incurable indigent patients. Most of these institutions are provided with trained nurses, under the supervision of the Matron of the base hospital.
- (h.) *A Maternity Ward.*—The four chief towns of the Dominion are provided with a maternity hospital under the control of the Department—St. Helens Hospitals. It is hoped that in the course of the next few years all country hospitals will be provided with maternity wards.
- (i.) *Secondary Hospitals.*—These are situated in the smaller towns, and usually consist of some ten to twenty beds. Naturally, these hospitals are not as fully equipped as the base hospitals, being used more for cases of ordinary illness or emergency. For special work or major operations it is the desire of the Department and the Boards that patients needing such should be sent to the base hospital of the district, where they would have the advantages of the services—whether for consultation or operation—of several medical men.
- (j.) *A Cottage Hospital.*—Usually of some two to six beds, with a room attached for maternity cases. The functions of these institutions should be more for first aid until the cases can with safety be transmitted to the secondary or base hospital.

11. *The District Nurse* is a most important adjunct to our hospital system. For the most part these nurses are sent to the more remote country districts—the backblocks—where their services as nurses and midwives are much sought. It is by means of the services of such officers that we hope to bring the backblocks more in touch with our hospital system, of which the district nurse is the outpost. It is the hope of the Department and the Boards that backblock settlers will provide cottages for these nurses, not only for them to live in, but with an extra room or so in which emergency cases can be treated until they can with safety be forwarded to the secondary or base hospital of the district, or which could be used for maternity cases.

There are also special nurses appointed for work among the Maoris. These nurses are paid by the Department, but are controlled by the Boards, who are better able to decide in which part of the hospital district they should be stationed.

12. In conjunction with the services of these nurses the Department is considering a subsidized medical service in the backblocks, with a view to encouraging a good stamp of medical practitioner to settle in the more remote districts.