

UN-Secretariat matters A-Sa: UN-Secretariat matters A-Sa - 15

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Health Clinic

Report for February 1955

H E A L T H S E R V I C E

REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 1955

Staff Association -

The Health Service has noted with gratification the resolution adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Staff Association on 3 February expressing "appreciation for the great improvement noticed in the Health Service".

It also appreciates the Staff Council's comments on the Survey Group Report on the Health Service, to the effect that "the present policies and services have already been instrumental in re-establishing confidence and thus enhancing the usefulness of the Health Service to the staff members as well as to the Organization".

Clinic -

Visits to the Clinic during February totalled 1,623. The following breakdown shows the categories of those attending the Clinic:

- Secretariat	1,475
- Delegations	13
- Visitors	12
- Outside Employees	78
- Specialized Agencies	45

	1,623

The following figures will give an idea of the range of the Clinic's activities:

- First-aid, treatments, etc.	837
- Consultations	379
- Medical Examinations	146
- Immunizations	131
- X-rays taken	265
- Laboratory tests	438

Some 40% of all visits, namely 320 visits, to the Clinic were for respiratory infections. Corresponding figures for January 1955, February 1954 and January 1953 were respectively 211, 179 and 423.

With regard to periodic examinations, improvements in procedure have been made to permit staff members under 30 years who have hitherto been offered examinations once every three years, to have this facility, if they wish, every two years; while this would result in about 75 more examinations a year to be undertaken, it would eliminate the additional procedures involved where these staff members had physical examinations every three years and x-ray examinations every two years.

Arrangements have been made to undertake the physical examinations, or report on the physical fitness, of 67 staff members who are candidates for assignment to the forthcoming WHO Assembly in Mexico City.

Blood Bank -

71 requests for blood were received during 1954, of which 20 were for staff members and 51 for members of their families.

Environmental Hygiene -

Inspections were made during the month, not only of the kitchen and cafeteria, but also of other places serving food, namely the Press Bar, the bars in the Delegates' lounges, the Press Club, the Library building and the Secretariat lounge.

Two complaints regarding the temperature of offices and regarding slippery floors were investigated.

Sick Leave -

Statistics for the last six months of 1954 show that, on the basis of a yearly rate, the average number of days taken for sick leave was 4.8, of which 3.1 days were certified and 1.7 days were uncertified sick leave. The sick leave rate was highest in November (yearly rate of 5.9 days per staff member) and lowest in July (2.9 days). As regards types of illness requiring absence from work, the main causes were:

- Respiratory infections	1,479 days of sickness
- Gastro-intestinal diseases	588.5 days of sickness
- Accidents	381
- Emotional disturbances	360

To improve the reporting of sick leave, model forms have been prepared to assist the private physicians of staff members, when writing medical certificates, to comply with the provisions of Staff Rule 106.2(V).

Review Board Cases -

The role of the Health Service in Review Board cases has been clarified in discussions with the Director of Personnel, so that the Health Service would not be put into the position of having to make recommendations in cases involving termination. An agreed procedure, to be followed on a trial basis, has been worked out along the following lines:

After the Health Service has indicated which cases may be approved on health grounds for permanent appointment, or might be postponed for a limited period, the cases in which health is the major factor taken into account for proposed termination, shall be referred to outside Medical Consultants for their advice.

The Health Service will provide to the outside physicians a summary of the case, based exclusively on information secured from such required examinations as preplacement, pre-mission and post-mission examinations, x-ray examinations for tuberculosis case findings, medical certificates for sick leave, and any examinations which might have been made in connexion with claims for disability benefit or for compensation for injury or other disability attributable to service. Information from voluntary periodic examinations will not be included, unless the staff member himself requests such inclusion or agrees to its inclusion on the recommendation of the Health Service.

Pension Fund -

The Director assisted at meetings of the U.N. Staff Pension Committee, on 11 February, and the Standing Committee of the Joint Staff Pension Board, on 25 February.

Outside Contacts and Visitors -

Outside contacts have included Professor Robert Loeb, of Columbia University and Presbyterian Hospital, concerning medical education facilities and recruitment; Professor Harold G. Wolff, of Cornell University Medical College and New York Hospital, concerning academic facilities, and the possible cooperation of U.N. staff members in certain studies on human ecology; Professor Dickson Richards, of Columbia University and Bellevue Hospital, concerning academic facilities and recruitment; Dr. S.D. Ezell, Secretary of the New York State Board of Medical Examiners, concerning implementation of Headquarters District Regulation #2 governing qualifications of U.N. doctors, nurses, etc. and recruitment of such on as wide a geographical basis as possible (General Assembly resolution 604(VI)); Dr. Leona Baumgartner, New York City Health Commissioner, concerning proposed revision of the New York City Sanitary Code; Dr. L.W. Gorham, Director of the Public Health Research Institute, concerning influenza vaccine; Miss Margaret Klem, of the New York City Department of Health, concerning health centres in New York City; and Dr. Edwin F. Daily, Medical Director of the Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York.

Visitors have included Dr. Fitzgerald, Professor of Surgery at the University of Christchurch, New Zealand; Mr. Currey, U.N. Representative of Christian Science organizations; and Mrs. C.S. Ascher, Secretary of the U.S. Committee for the World Federation for Mental Health.