

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON PLANNING
for
NOVA SCOTIA REHABILITATION CENTER
and
FACULTY OF ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS
DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

7 provinces

*want to know
O.T. Plans
all provinces*

November 21, 1968

Founded
Aug 1956

The Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Center in Halifax has for a number of years provided treatment and rehabilitative services to patients from all parts of the province who suffered physical disabilities.

Despite the inadequacy of the facilities ~~presently~~ *at present* occupied by the Center, a creditable record of service has been accomplished by its personnel under the professional direction of Dr. Arthur Shears.

However, because of the extreme limitations of its present quarters the Rehabilitation Center has not been able to offer care and treatment to the many hundreds in the province who would benefit from such service.

When: Notwithstanding its limitations the Center admitted 151 persons to its 19 beds and provided out-patient care to 1,431 patients, whose visits numbered 5,950. Despite lack of space and equipment, it is remarkable to note that 103,137 treatments of all types were provided to in-patients and out-patients.

Because of the desperate need for more and better treatment for the physically handicapped the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Council established the Center and undertook to plan and build a facility that would offer the treatment and vocational services necessary for the Maritime region and in cooperation with Dalhousie University make available educational resources for training health personnel in the technical and professional specialties related to physical medicine and rehabilitation.

The planning study was undertaken in late summer of
this year and was designed to review architectural programming previously prepared, to relate service needs of the region to this program, and to recommend changes in scope where indicated. The consulting services will also include cost management of the project to ensure that an effective facility can be constructed within a realistic budget.

More importantly, perhaps, than the physical planning is defining the role of the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Center in serving unmet needs of the people within the province - and to some extent elsewhere in the Maritimes.

It is significant to note that this project is unique inasmuch as it is the first time a health service facility of this type has been planned in conjunction with a school of allied health professions with both interrelated functions in the one building.

The project planning has been funded by the government of Canada as a regional facility and therefore has the endorsement of the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland. The interprovincial relationships will be primarily in the area of health professions education. Training of personnel in the fields of physical therapy, occupational therapy and nursing will be enhanced by the clinical experience offered by the Rehabilitation Center.

The School of Nursing, Dalhousie University, will expand its enrollment from 207 to 400. Similarly, the number of Physical Therapists undergoing training can be increased from 16 to 36. In addition, the new Center will make it possible to start a training program for Occupational Therapists.

The evaluation, treatment, vocational training and reassessment of disabled persons will be largely an intra-provincial service with, perhaps, special cases being referred from other provinces where treatment facilities are not as adequate for long term care or not as highly specialized.

The overall program of the Center is assured of high quality service by virtue of the affiliation with the Faculty of Medicine of Dalhousie University through its Service of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. This specialty of medicine will be housed in the Center offering undergraduate and graduate training for young physicians.

The project as it is conceptualized represents the philosophy of Dr. Arthur Shears, Associate Professor of Medicine and Medical Director Rehabilitation Center; whose goal it is to provide optimum rehabilitation services to all disabled so that their dependency can be managed until they are rehabilitated into employment.

The merit of this project has long been supported by

the University, the Provincial Department of Health and the Hospital Insurance Commission.

It is not likely, however, that the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Center would be moving forward to the realization of these meritorious goals were it not for the dedication and public spirit of the men who bear the trust responsibility on the Boards of the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Council and the Center.

Objectives

A project of this scope designed to provide comprehensive rehabilitation services for all disabilities and with extensive educational facilities is a costly undertaking. It must be accomplished, but in a way that will justify the heavy expenditure of public and private funds.

The preliminary findings of the consultants' study tend to warrant such an expenditure. Indeed, the need is so apparent that funding should be directed to this project on a top priority basis.

Statistical analysis of the need is being conducted with

the cooperation of the Hospital Insurance Commission. This will provide information in respect to type of disability, number of persons in need and their geographical location. These data will assist in determining more specifically the scope of the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Center and in addition, to what degree similar services are needed in other regions of the province.

Relationships with other agencies, such as the Workmens Compensation Board must be planned so that services to the disabled can be efficiently related.

But the unmet need for rehabilitation is not generally understood. There is a lack of awareness on the part of the public and even some physicians regarding the technical advances and treatment techniques available for restoring disabled persons to useful and active lives. Moreover, many disabled persons do not seek help because they do not know how to obtain it. Many are shy or afraid and without guidance are deprived of care that would restore their independence.

Current studies by the United States Social and Rehabilitation Service indicate that 1.5 persons in every

thousand are newly disabled each year.

It is interesting - and startling - to note that this percentage ratio applied to the Nova Scotia population of 760,000 suggests that 1,140 ^{working adults} persons per year are becoming disabled and in need of treatment. And these figures do not reflect the existing need, *nor children and aged.*

It is unreasonable to assume that many of these cases could be treated in nearby hospitals which lack trained personnel and special facilities. Most would require extended care in a hospital such as is planned for the Nova Scotia Rehabilitation Center. On the basis of the above figures, and assuming that perhaps 25% would receive ambulant care, 130 beds would be required to serve the needs, as well as extensive treatment facilities for ambulant patients.

While the planning studies have yet to refine the data and more precisely define the scope of the facility - the urgent need for the Center is beyond question.