

Education in General Practice in the Netherlands*

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SUMMARY

With the aid of a film the training in general practice is discussed at 4 of the 7 universities in the Netherlands: Groningen, Utrecht, Nijmegen and Leyden. The differences in training methods are shown.

In the Netherlands medicine is taught at 7 universities, while in a few years an 8th faculty will be in operation in Maastricht. Each faculty has a department for general practice. We will show you the set-up of the institutes of Groningen, Utrecht, Nijmegen and Leyden. We are dealing with the education of all medical students here, not only of those who want to be general practitioners.

In Groningen tuition takes place at the institute for general practice under the direction of Professor van Deen. A university group-practice of 3 doctors, who are employed by the university on a full-time basis, is connected to the institute. The practice consists of 2 000 patients. The 3 general practitioners give half of their time to the group-practice and the other half to research and group discussions with the students. In the 4th, 6th and 7th years, group discussions are held with students about *capita selecta* chosen in consultation with the students and about casuistics in the general practitioner's practice.

In Utrecht a university group-practice is developing, situated outside the institute in a part of Utrecht called Overvecht. Three doctors from the institute work daily in this practice. The number of patients is expected to be 8 000 or 9 000. The institute is under the guidance of Professor Dr van Es who works in the practice of his partner for one day a week. Originally the General Practitioners' Institute of the Netherlands was set up in Utrecht without being in any way connected with the University, but mainly as an Institute of the NHG (Dutch College of General Practitioners). Now a branch of this institute, the General Practitioners' Institute of the University of Utrecht, does the work at university level, like the other institutes in Holland. The original institute remains an independent institute, one of its most important tasks being the gathering of information in the field of practice organization. Every doctor in Holland may make use of this information and there are no plans for the university institutes to enter upon this field.

Professor van Es is the first lecturer in general practice in Holland. In Utrecht there is a new curriculum and he

gives lectures in the 3rd and 4th years of the curriculum for all medical students.

While in a number of university towns the professors of general practice have full-time employment at the university, Professor Huygen has a practice of his own in Lent, very close to Nijmegen, in which he is still closely involved. The institute of general practitioners is situated near the medical faculty. Three practices of independent general practitioners are associated with the institute: a large city-practice, a country-practice and a small city-practice. The doctors are employed by the institute on a 50% basis and they are aided by 3 fellow-workers who are also employed on the same basis. These 3 practices together treat 12 500 patients.

In the 3rd, 4th and 5th years attention is given to the morbidity in the general practitioners' practice, the influence of disease on the average family, and the function of the general practitioner. This is done in lectures and in discussion-groups. The students are allowed a choice between the two. In the 7th year the student has to be a co-assistant to a general practitioner for at least 4, but often 8 weeks, in which an account is given of the social-medical situation in a family in this practice. The general practitioner is present at the meeting at which the co-assistant discusses the patient about whom he made an account.

The Leyden institute is led by one full-time professor, Professor Dijkhuis, one lecturer, Dr Bremer, and 5 part-time general practitioners with practices of their own and a geriatrist who also works at a nursing home. In the lecture room a group of no more than 40 students can follow by television the examination which takes place in the consulting room. There are lectures during the first 3 years. In the 4th, a start is made with problem-solving. A so-called peripheral clinic is associated with the institute, with 128 general practitioners and about 300 000 patients.

In the 6th year the students enter the practice as co-assistants. They are present at the interviews and accompany the general practitioner when he visits his patients. After 2 weeks the students get together at the institute for an evaluation with one of the members of the staff. The co-assistantship is preceded by a course in which a number of facets of general practice are reviewed, like practice organization, morbidity, co-operation with specialists and others, medicament therapy, etc. There is a monthly lunch meeting of the members of the peripheral clinic at the institute, where a speaker deals with a subject in which we are involved at the institute or at one of the members' practices.

* Paper presented at the 48th South African Medical Congress (M.A.S.A.), March 1971.