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EDITORIAL

Daghospitale

Van alle nuwe instellings wat die verskaffing van mediese dienste betref, is die daghospitale in Kaapland seker een van die dawerendste suksesse. Verlede week het ons 'n artikel' gepubliseer waarin die ontstaan en werking van die klinieke meer volledig uiteengesit word, en diegene wat vir hierdie nuwe ontwikkeling in ons mediese versorging verantwoordelik is, verdien ons lof en dank. Die hele skema is nog relatief jonk, want dit is maar eers op 1 April 1969 dat die finale besluit geneem is om daarmee voort te gaan, maar die goeie vrugte wat afgewerp word is alreeds baie duidelik in die gemeenskap merkbaar.

Die gedagte om satelliet-klinieke daar te stel wat die werkklas op sentrale hospitale verlig, is so vanselfsprekend dat mens nou in retrospek wonder hoekom dit nie lankal gedoen is nie. Hierdie daghospitale doen egter meer as dit, want benewens die effek om as afleivore te dien wat die groot stroom leiwat na die sentrale punt verdeel, skep hierdie leivore ook die moontlikheid van sproei-punte binne die bereik van die verbruikers. Die beplanning is sulks dat daar uiteindelik 'n daghospitaal sal wees binne stapafstand van iedere lid van die gemeenskap wat van die dienste gebruik wil maak.

Deur die hospitale streng op huisartsvlak te bestuur en hulle nie in satelliet spesialistesentrums te probeer omskep nie, word ook toegesien dat die beskikbare mediese mannekrag nie onnodig oor 'n wye gebied ingespan word nie, en verhoed dit die aankoop van duur, gesofistikeerde apparaat wat reeds in die sentrale hospitale beskikbaar is. Iedere praktisyn weet dat verreweg die grootste gedeelte

van sy dagtaak roetine, selfbeperkende siektes behels, wat weliswaar versorging vereis, maar wat beslis nie in hoogste rat die intensiewe spesialistebult hoef op te sukkel nie. Dit is juis hierdie alledaagse versorging wat so goed en doeltreffend deur die daghospitaalpersoneel gehanteer kan word.

Daar is ook 'n ander ontwikkeling wat streng in gedagte gehou moet word. 'n Aksioom wat dikwels nie genoeg klem ontvang nie, is dat huisartskunde nie gedoseer kan word sonder 'n huisartspraktyk nie. Hierdie feit is jare gelede reeds deur wyle professor Richard Scott in Edinburg besef toe hy die eerste volwaardige huisartsleerstool daar aanvaar het. Edinburg mediese skool het twee 'Apothecary' praktyke oorgeneem vir die opleiding van voor- en nagraadse studente, en tans is professor J. van Es ook in Nederland besig met die daarstelling van 'n huisartspraktyk wat aan die Universiteit van Utrecht verbonde is. Is die daghospitale nie die ideale oplossing in Suid-Afrika nie? 'n Bietjie skaaf hier en bietjie aanpas daar, en siedaar, ons het ons lang-gesogte huisartspraktyk vir die opleiding van ons mediese studente.

Nou moet daar net gekeer word dat die hospitale nie ontaard nie. Dit gebeur so dikwels dat veral Amerikaanse maatskappye 'n nuwe kompakte motor ontwerp, wat dan maar telkens na 'n paar jaar se 'verbeterings' uitstoel tot 'n groot familie-motor. Dit mag nie die geval wees met die daghospitale nie; dat hulle sal en moet toeneem in aantal sodat die dienste wyer en wyer uitbrei, is onteenseglik, maar hulle moet nie ontaard in mini-hospitale wat klein nabootsings van die groter sentrums is nie.

Reading a Paper at a Congress

The delegate who is about to read a paper at a congress has to face certain built-in handicaps, and his or her technical ability to overcome these, almost more than the quality of the research to be presented, will determine the success and acceptability of the presentation. There is a strict time schedule that has to be adhered to; the audience is more likely than not bored and tired, and would much rather be drinking coffee or beer than listening to the speaker; and there are the hazards of mechanical faults in the equipment that every conference is heir to.

The time factor is the first problem that has to be coped with. When someone is invited to read a paper, a specific time is usually allotted to the speaker. No matter how long this is, be it 5 minutes or 30, there is absolutely no excuse whatsoever for anyone to exceed the limit. With tape-recorders freely available it is the simplest thing in the world to time one's speech to the last second, and a delegate who is not prepared to go to the trouble of rehearsing his or her presentation over and over again until an exact prediction of the duration is possible, has no right to be on the podium. To type a paper and then to start reading it at the congress, only to discover halfway through that the allotted time has passed, does smack of arrogance beyond description. 'My time and my research are of supreme importance and the time of the chairman and his delegates is of no consequence.' We should one day like to attend a conference where speakers who overshoot their time are not merely asked to step down, but are physically thrown out of the congress-room. If the allotted time is too short to allow presentation of the subject, the invitation to read a paper should be declined. Once the delegate accepts, he enters into a moral agreement to abide by the time schedule.

It is unrealistic to expect the audience to be as enthusiastic about one's research as oneself or one's co-workers have been. It is the duty of the speaker to catch and hold the attention of his audience. We have heard them all, the inaudible mumblers, the fumblers with disarrayed papers, the droners and the nervous twitchers. We cannot all be public performers, but the answer is simple: if you cannot do it yourself, then find someone who can. There is no reason why the audience should suffer the agonies of listening to rank amateurism. And the remark: 'This slide is not a good example', should carry a heavy sentence, preferably without the option of a fine. If it is not a good example, then why show it? The audience should not have to be asked whether the legend can be read at the back of the hall, when this should have been checked by the speaker during the teabreak.

Will congress organisers please take note that even in these modern, highly technological times, projectors do break down, light-bulbs do fuse and loudspeakers do not necessarily work merely because they have been plugged into a wall socket. Spare bulbs ready at hand, alternative projectors (duplicate sets of slides and all), and well-tested amplifiers represent such an infinitesimal additional cost compared with the over-all monies spent on a congress, that their absence cannot be excused. A badly-prepared speaker with an unrehearsed speech deserves only one fate: to see his audience get up and leave the hall.

If the fault is the result of bad organisation, the speaker can only hope that the audience will tackle the congress secretary, who would probably be on his way out of town if he had his own welfare at heart.
