CORRESPONDENCE

THE WARLINGHAM PARK INQUIRY

Dear Sir,

Dr Glaister's critique of the Warlingham Park Inquiry (*Bulletin*, August 1977, p 10) seems to me rock-eyed and misleadingly unbalanced. He evidently believes there is such a thing as a 'normal rate of suicide' (presumably established by divine intervention at Warlingham in 1960–65 or earlier), and that that hospital suffered from an abnormally low rate of suicide in the eight years 1966–73. It is this abnormality, he says, which should have been studied by the Inquiry Committee, and not the rise above the 'normal' rate ($P = 0.05$) in the years 1974 and 1975 which preoccupied them.

He thinks the Report of the Inquiry entirely inadequate and a fiasco because it makes such a poor showing as a scientific contribution to the epidemiology of suicide, rather as a grocer might belittle it because there is no mention of the price of cheese. In fact, however, the Report is chiefly concerned with the running of psychiatric services, both in hospital and in the community, and its analyses and proposals are likely to be of great value to those concerned in providing such services—consultants, nursing officers, hospital administrators. It has some useful things to say about cultivating the friendship of your local newspaper. It draws attention to the rather careless collection and foolish definition of hospital suicide statistics by the DHSS. It points to the need for monitoring the working of community services as staff are moved into them and the need for good quick communication throughout a comprehensive service. It attempts an operational definition of suicidal risk which could be helpful to doctors and nurses required to assess it. Above all, it has a good deal to say on the changing work roles of the psychiatric nurse, and what this means in terms of essential minimum staffing of the different kinds of wards and out-patient services.

One of the grave failures of the NHS, because it is probably at the bottom of the various hospital scandals which have led to Inquiries, and of the persistent calls for more physical security, has been the assessment of nursing needs in terms of beds or of bodies (quite inappropriate for psychiatry) instead of in terms of work loads. No doubt we shall be hearing a lot more about this, from the unions if from no one else. Don't let Dr Glaister misdirect you about the significance of Warlingham.

JOHN CRAMMER

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

University of Birmingham

An introductory course in Family Therapy, consisting of ten weekly half-day sessions from 5 October–7 December, will be held at the Centre for Postgraduate Psychiatry, Uffculme Clinic, Queensbridge Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8QD, and is intended for psychiatrists, social workers, psychologists, etc. who wish to gain basic knowledge of the theory and practice of family therapy. The fee is £35. Further details and application forms may be obtained from Christine Neal at the above address.

British Association of Counselling

There will be an inaugural meeting of the 'Counselling in a Medical Setting' Division on Saturday, 22 October, at the Community Health Foundation, 188 Old Street, London, E.C.1. Details from Dr A. J. Haines, 4 Greenland Road, London, N.W.1 (01-485 0981).

British Psycho-Analytical Society

The British Psycho-Analytical Society announces two one-day courses at which talks and discussions will be presented by members of the Society. Both courses will be held at the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, London, and are open to medical and other professional workers. The fee for each day is £10, which includes morning coffee and afternoon tea; admission by ticket only.

Saturday, 15 October, 9.30 am–12.30 pm and 2.00–5.00 pm: A one-day course on 'Basic Psycho-Analytical Concepts'.

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Saturday, 22 October, 9.30 am–12.30 pm and 2.00–5.00 pm: A day of talks and discussion on 'The Care of Women with Post-Natal Depression'.

Applications for tickets, accompanied by cheques made payable to 'The Institute of Psycho-Analysis', should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Public Lectures Committee, The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1M 7RD.

Royal Society of Health

The Royal Society of Health announces the following forthcoming meetings:

Wednesday, 26 October, at Bordesley Green Social Welfare Centre, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, at 2 pm: 'Services for the Young Offender'.

Wednesday, 2 November, at 13 Grosvenor Place, London, at 2.30 pm: 'The Revision of the Mental Health Act 1959: Should the Mentally Handicapped be Excluded?'.

Further details from the Conference Department, The Royal Society of Health, 13 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7EN.

Association of Psychiatrists in Training

A one-day workshop in Examination Techniques, organized by the Association of Psychiatrists in Training, will be held at the Maudsley Hospital, London, on Saturday, 5 November, from 9 am—6 pm. Style of presentation; case formulation; history taking; examination of patient; the essay; the viva and the multiple choice will be covered, using simulated examination situations and individual feedback. Fees: Members £13.50; Non-members £15.00. For further details apply APIT Workshop Secretary, 99 Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ.

Conferences Abroad:

Information about the following conferences has been received via the World Psychiatric Association:

7th International Institute on the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependence: Lisbon, Portugal, 16–21 October. Information from ICAA, Case Postale 140, CH-1001 Lausanne, Switzerland.

Workshop and Scientific Meeting of the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis: Atlanta, USA, 17–23 October. Information from the Executive Director, 2400 E. Devon Avenue, Les Plaines, Illinois 60018, USA.

Meeting of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry: Houston, USA, 19–24 October. Information from the Executive Director, 1800 R. Street N.W., Washington DC 20009, USA.

American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law: New Orleans, USA, 20–23 October. Information from Department of Psychiatry, College of Medicine, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40506, USA.

Annual Seminar of the International College of Psychosomatic Medicine: Champlain, NY, USA, 21–22 October. Information from Dr A. J. Krakowski, Suite 103, 210 Cornelia Street, Plattsburgh, NY 12901, USA.

Special Symposium on Drug Dependence: New Delhi, India, 23–29 October. Information from Dr O. P. Ghai, All-India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India.

Annual Meeting of the National Association for Mental Health: Washington, DC, USA, 26–29 October. Information from NAMH, 1800 N. Kent Street, Arlington, Virginia 22209, USA.

3rd International Symposium and Workshops on Short-term Dynamic Psychotherapy, Symposium on Crisis Theory and Crisis Intervention, and *Symposium on Short-term Therapies of Sexual Dysfunctions:* Los Angeles, California, USA, 8–13 November. Information from Dr H. Davanloo, PO Box 432, Place Bonaventure, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H5A 1B5.

1st International Action Conference on Substance Abuse: Phoenix, Arizona, USA, 9–13 November. Information from Do-It-Now-Foundation, PO Box 5115, Phoenix, Arizona 85010, USA.

Meeting of the American Association of Psychiatric Services for Children: Washington, DC, USA, 9–13 November. Information from AAPSC, 1701 18th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20009, USA.

Annual Meeting of the Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine: Mesa, California, USA, 13–16 November. Information from Executive Secretary, 4902 Tollview Drive, Rolling Meadows, Illinois 60008, USA.

'Phronesis' World Congress and 1st General Assembly of the Ibero-American Society of Neurological Sciences: Madrid, Spain, 14–18 November. Information from the Secretary, M. Pedrayes 20-1°-B, Oviedo, Spain.

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