

Locally Oriented Health Careers Manual

WILLIAM J. MEYER, M.D., M.P.H.

PERSONAL interviews with several guidance counselors brought out the need for (a) locally oriented information about careers in the field of health, and (b) a sourcebook containing all the specific information, both scholastic and financial, useful to a high school student in deciding on a career consistent with the criteria of choice and ability.

Guidance counselors are busy people. It is impossible for them to check through their considerable library of source materials to find, for each student being counseled, detailed information on job descriptions, course requirements, institutions offering training in the career in question, academic costs, scholarship and other financial aid available, and all the other facts a young person needs to help him plan a career.

Early in 1958 the Glens Falls District Office of the New York State Department of Health undertook to provide these facts about careers in health in the form of a health careers manual. This decision was made because of the realization that, if the counselors were to be more effective in recruitment for health, they must have a better tool than any at that time available to them.

It is true that they had the excellent "Health Careers Guidebook," published by the National Health Council, and the other equally good recruitment materials published by the council and other agencies. However, the Guidebook was published in 1955 and certain parts of it, such as salaries and training costs, were already somewhat out of date; it also lacked specific information on financial aid and local sources of additional information, all important facts to a young person considering a health career.

Dr. Meyer is district health officer of the Glens Falls District, New York State Department of Health.

Obviously, local orientation is impossible in a sourcebook designed for national distribution.

Guidance counselors are an important group in any program of career recruitment because they exert a significant influence on high school students' decisions. Like everyone else, they must perform their services within the limitations of the resources available to them. It is only natural that they will be more successful and will put a little more emphasis in those areas in which they have effective tools.

Therefore, it was decided to design a manual that would encourage the counselors to emphasize health careers. It was also decided to borrow material freely and to devise a book that would be easy to handle and simple to revise annually.

Format

The manual consists of 35 folders made from index paper, each containing a pocket on the left side. Front and back covers are of heavy, embossed fiber paper, and the book is bound together by a multiple-grip plastic binder.

Stapled inside the front cover are these instructions.

INSTRUCTIONS IN THE USE OF THIS MANUAL

This notebook has been designed with the hope of providing guidance counselors and students with a tool whereby they can obtain sufficient information to help them decide on a career in health. The format is such that any specific information can easily be found. For each health category there is also information on whom to contact for additional details.

The first section of the book consists of two lists of scholarships, neither of which is all inclusive. The first includes general scholarships which are available to high school graduates planning on entering the field of health (as well as other fields).

The second list gives information on scholarships available in specific careers.

The rest of the book consists of a descriptive page for each health career, accompanied by recruitment literature which in most instances has been supplied by the officially recognized national or State association in each field. In a few instances there is no such literature because none is available. The descriptive page gives the following information under separate headings:

- The job
- Salary
- Opportunities
- Training needed
- Cost
- Schools (partial list of nearby schools)
- Further information (where to obtain)

The lists of scholarships, as mentioned above, are far from complete. However, it is hoped that annual revision of this notebook will be possible and that with each annual revision the scope of these lists will be expanded.

In listing the general scholarships for local high school graduates, an attempt was made to include information on those available through the schools specifically mentioned in the descriptions of the individual careers; however, the list is not complete. The list of scholarships available to local graduates for training in specific health careers is arranged according to particular careers. This list is national in scope and is more definitive than the general scholarship list.

The rest of the manual consists of 34 folders, each one devoted to a single career, although in a few instances one folder contains information on several related careers. Stapled on the right, inside each folder, is a 1-page, mimeographed job description sheet. The 40 careers described, including hospital careers as 1 group, are the following:

Administrator, public health	Medical technologist
Chiropodist	Nurse, registered
Dental assistant	Nurse, psychiatric
Dental hygienist	Nurse, industrial
Dental laboratory technician	Nurse, public health
Dentist	Nurse, school
Dietitian	Nurse, practical
Hospital careers	Occupational therapist
Industrial hygienist	Optometrist
Medical librarian	Orthoptic technician
Medical record librarian	Osteopathic physician
Medical record technician	Pharmacist
Medical secretary	Physical therapist
	Physician
	Psychologist

Public health educator	Social worker, psychiatric
Radioisotope technician	Speech and hearing therapist
Research, health (chemistry, biochemistry, physics, physiology)	Statistician, public health
Sanitarian	Veterinarian
Sanitary engineer	Vocational rehabilitation counselor
Social worker, medical	X-ray technician

In the pocket on the left side of each folder are recruitment pamphlets obtained from the national or State headquarters of the official organization for a particular discipline. If no official organization exists for members of a specific discipline, recruitment material was obtained from more general sources such as the Hospital Association of New York State, the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, and the Public Health Service. This literature presents information that supplements and expands upon that given in the job description sheet. In a few instances these pockets are empty, because diligent inquiry failed to unearth any existing recruitment literature.

Plans for Revision

It is planned to revise the manual annually and to have the revisions in the hands of the guidance counselors in time for the second half of the school term when most vocational guidance activity occurs.

The format of the manual makes it easy to revise. Recruitment pamphlets can be changed merely by substituting new ones for old. Minor changes in the job description sheet can be inked in. If a revision is extensive, the old sheet can be discarded and a new one stapled in. It is equally simple to revise the two scholarship lists by inking in minor changes, substituting pages, or stapling in a complete new list. The revisions with an instruction sheet will be mailed to the counselors.

Discussion

When they first received the manuals, the local guidance counselors were enthusiastic. They were particularly pleased with its scope and local orientation and the fact that all the information was available in a single source.

After using it from January 14 to May 1, 1959, they received the following questionnaire:

1. Have you any definite knowledge that the manual has increased interest among your students in a health career? Yes — No —

2. If yes, what is your rough guess, *without consulting your records*, of any increase over previous years in the number of this year's graduating class planning to enter a health career? —

3. Now that you have had the opportunity to use the manual, has it been of value to you in your work? Yes — No —

4. Would you please list any suggestions you have for improvement of the manual.

The replies to these questions did not provide objective, quantitative data; the questionnaire was deliberately so planned because it was felt that if the people using the manual indicated its value to them, this expression would be sufficient to justify continuation of the project. Also, since guidance counselors are busy, no more information was solicited from them and compiled than was necessary to accomplish our purpose.

Twenty-three of the 28 school guidance departments answered the questionnaire. Seventeen answered "Yes" to question 1, five answered "No," and one stated the manual had not been in use long enough to determine.

The answers to question 2 included 12 positive statements. Five stated that it had stimulated interest in lower classes (10th and 11th grades). Six did not answer this question.

All 23 respondents answered question 3 affirmatively.

Answers to question 4 were as follows: 11 stated the manual to be excellent and needed no improvement, 1 suggested more "picture-type" folios, 1 wanted more empty pockets to hold additional material, 2 stated the manual should be kept up to date, and 1 wanted a smaller manual. Seven did not answer.

Collecting the material for the manual was a task of considerable magnitude. The most difficult job, however, was the process of selection. Much more good recruitment material is available than can be included in a volume of this type and still keep it to a size that is easily handled. The author found the health careers materials of the Empire State Health Council and the State Charities Aid Association of particular value. The pamphlets selected are purely a matter of personal judgment; other persons would undoubtedly make a dif-

ferent choice. The titles and sources of the recruitment literature inserted in the health careers manual are listed at the end of the article. Job description sheets had to be rewritten many times to achieve the desired degree of brevity, and many excellent leaflets and pamphlets had to be ruthlessly weeded out.

No claim is made to any originality in any of the material included in the manual. We borrowed freely. The only merit to the manual is that it is a compendium of much existing material and provides a single source for all the information a young person in this locality needs to help him decide on a future career in health.

There is no doubt as to the value of the local orientation of the manual. All scholarships originating within the health jurisdiction are listed; any scholarship whose restrictions make local students ineligible for it has been omitted. Finally, when the training is available from many schools, only those nearest at hand are listed. No information on student loans is included.

Creation of the manual is only the beginning of the district office's activities in recruiting for health careers. A number of local official and voluntary health organizations have an interest in this effort, and several have established active programs. It is hoped that an areawide health careers committee can be established to facilitate coordination of present activities and to stimulate a broadened program. Such an expanded program might include (a) extension of surveys of local opportunities in health careers, (b) expansion of the health careers programs presented in the schools, (c) health careers workshops for school personnel, and (d) a speakers bureau to supply schools with speakers who represent the various health professions.

Summary

A locally oriented health careers manual was created by the Glens Falls District Office of the New York State Department of Health and distributed to all school guidance departments within the health jurisdiction.

The value of this particular manual lies in its comprehensive format and its local orientation.

It supplies, within a single, easily handled volume, all the specific information needed by a high school student to help him decide on a career in the health field. The material is arranged for easy reference. Annual revisions can be incorporated with a minimum amount of effort.

The manual has been well received by local guidance counselors. They have expressed the opinion that it has proved of definite value to

them in their work, and that it is a useful instrument in recruiting more high school graduates for health careers.

The manual is the first step in the recruiting activities of the district office. Other possibilities for future efforts are suggested. They include formation of an areawide health careers committee and providing the schools with workshops, speakers, and additional programs to stimulate interest in the health professions.

Recruitment Literature Used in Health Careers Manual

"Stepping Up to a Career." American Podiatry Association, 3301 16th St. NW., Washington 10, D.C.

"Be a Dental Assistant." *"Dear Jill."* American Dental Assistants Association, 410 First National Bank Building, LaPorte, Ind.

"Dental Hygiene Aptitude Testing Program." American Dental Hygienists Association, 304 East 45th St., New York 17, N.Y.

"Accredited Dental Hygiene Schools." American Dental Association, Council on Dental Education, 222 East Superior St., Chicago 11, Ill.

"I Am a Dental Hygienist—May I Interest You in My Profession?" Dental Society of the State of New York, Council on Dental Health, Hotel Granada, 268 Ashland Pl., Brooklyn 17, N.Y.

"Careers in Dentistry." *"Dental Aptitude Testing Program."* American Dental Association, 222 East Superior St., Chicago 11, Ill.

"Should You Be a Dentist?" New York Life Insurance Co., 51 Madison Ave., New York 10, N.Y.

"Dietetics as a Profession." *"Chart our Course Toward Dietetics."* *"The Future is Bright—Look Ahead."* *"Dietitians in Demand."* American Dietetic Association, 620 North Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

"Hospital Careers." Hospital Association of New York State, Inc., 11 North Pearl St., Albany 7, N.Y.

"Hospital Administration as a Career." American College of Hospital Administrators, 620 North Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Ill.

"Be a Medical Librarian!" *"Choose Medical Librarianship."* Medical Library Association, % Martha R. Neville, Presbyterian and Woman's Hospitals, 230 Lothrop St., Pittsburgh 13, Pa.

"Face the Future With Security." *"About to Choose a Career?—Consider Medical Record Library Science."* American Association of Medical Record Librarians, 510 North Dearborn St., Chicago 10, Ill.

"Approved Schools of Medical Technology." American Medical Association, Council on Medical Education and Hospitals, 535 North Dearborn St., Chicago 10, Ill.

"The Profession of Medical Technology—A Career of Service in Science." *The Registry of Medical Technologists of the American Society of Clinical Pathologists."* American Society of Clinical Pathologists,

Registry of Medical Technologists, Mrs. Ruth Drummond, Registrar, Muncie, Ind.

"Your Career in Nursing—A Directory of Schools of Nursing in N.Y. State." New York State Nurses Association, Katherine E. Rehder, Executive Director, 385 State St., Albany 10, N.Y.

"Careers in Mental Health as a Psychiatric Nurse." (PHS Pub. No. 26.) U.S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D.C.

"Picture of a Woman With a Future." American Nurses Association, Industrial Nurses Section, 2 Park Ave., New York 16, N.Y.

"On the Way Up—Practical Nursing." National Association for Practical Nurse Education, 654 Madison Ave., New York 21, N.Y.

"Should You Be a Nurse?" New York Life Insurance Co., 51 Madison Ave., New York 10, N.Y.

"The Public Health Nurse in Your Community." U.S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D.C.

"Your Career in Public Health Nursing." *"For Those Who Need Her—Meet Your Public Health Nurse."* New York State Department of Health, 84 Holland Ave., Albany, N.Y.

"Facts About Occupational Therapy." *"Before You Enter An Occupational Therapy Course."* *"Play On the Recovery Team—Be An Occupational Therapist."* *"Colleges and Universities Offering Courses in Occupational Therapy."* American Occupational Therapy Association, 250 West 57th St., New York 19, N.Y.

"Planning Your Professional Career—Optometry." American Optometric Association, 4030 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis 10, Mo.

"A Profession in Orthoptics—Needed, Satisfying, Profitable." American Orthoptic Council, John W. Henderson, M.D., Department of Ophthalmology, University Hospitals, Ann Harbor, Mich.

"The Osteopathic Profession and Its Colleges." American Osteopathic Association, 212 East Ohio St., Chicago 11, Ill.

"Should You Be a Pharmacist?" New York Life Insurance Co., 51 Madison Ave., New York 10, N.Y.

"Physical Therapy Programs Approved by the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association." *"Physical Therapy Offers*

You a Rewarding Career of . . . Service, Satisfaction, Security." *Sources of Financial Assistance for Physical Therapy Students.*" American Physical Therapy Association, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.

"Should You Be a Doctor?" New York Life Insurance Co., 51 Madison Ave., New York 10, N.Y.

"So, You Want To Be a Doctor?" American Medical Women's Association, Inc., 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.

"Medical Internships in the Public Health Service." U.S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D.C.

"Careers in Mental Health—Psychiatry, Psychiatric Social Work, Psychiatric Nursing, Clinical Psychology." (PHS Pub. No. 23.) *"Careers in Mental Health . . . As a Psychologist."* (PHS Pub. No. 27.) U.S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D.C.

"Health Education as a Career." Society of Public Health Educators, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.

"Careers in Physiology." American Physiological Society, 9650 Wisconsin Ave., Washington 14, D.C.

"Shall I Study Chemistry?" American Chemical Society, 1155 16th St., NW., Washington 6, D.C.

"Toward a Healthier World—Your Career in Sanitary Engineering." U.S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D.C.

"More Than a Job . . . Medical Social Work." National Association of Social Workers, Inc., Medical Social Work Section, 95 Madison Ave., New York 16, N.Y.

"Is This Your Line?" National Association of Social Workers, Inc., Psychiatric Social Work Section, 95 Madison Ave., New York 16, N.Y.

"Careers in Mental Health . . . As a Psychiatric Social Worker." (PHS Pub. No. 28). U.S. Public Health Service, Washington 25, D.C.

"Educational Qualifications of Public Health Statisticians." American Public Health Association, 1790 Broadway, New York, N.Y.

"Veterinary Medicine as a Career." American Veterinary Medical Association, 600 South Michigan Ave., Chicago 5, Ill.

"Colleges and Universities Receiving Teaching and Traineeship Grants for Rehabilitation Counselor Training, 1958-1959 Academic Year." Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D.C.

"Careers in X-ray Technology." American Society of X-ray Technicians, 16 14th St., Fond du Lac, Wis.

"Health Careers Calendar." National Health Council, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y.

Estimates of Acute Illness and Injury Among Children

Young children suffered acute illnesses with twice the frequency of adults during the year ending June 30, 1958, according to a report issued by the U.S. National Health Survey of the Public Health Service. The incidence rates for acute conditions involving medical attention or activity restriction ranged from an average high of four occurrences a year for children under 5 years old to a low of two for adults 25 years or over.

The report, which reveals the relative concentration of these illnesses and injuries—including everything from chickenpox and sore throat to appendicitis and broken legs—among children states that adults over 25 averaged 24.1 days of restricted activity from illness or injury per person during the year, compared with a range of 13.2 to 16.4 for age groups under 25.

Home accidents among children under 15 years of age were the chief cause of injuries restricting activity or requiring medical attention. They were an important cause, along with motor vehicle and work accidents, of restricted activity in the 15-24 age group.

The estimates are derived from interviews conducted for the National Health Survey by the U.S. Bureau of the Census with a representative sample of the civilian, noninstitutional population. The information recorded about individuals is confidential; only statistical totals are published.

The report is entitled "Children and Youth, Selected Health Characteristics, United States, July 1957-June 1958."