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THE SUCCESS OF THE IRISH HOSPITALS' SWEEPSTAKES

Were it not for the launching of the Irish Hospitals' Sweepstakes in the year 1930, it is certain that many of the voluntary hospitals in Ireland would have been forced through lack of funds to curtail their activities or face extinction. It is also true that the vast capital improvements carried out in both the voluntary and local authority hospitals over the past forty years could not have been carried out to the extent achieved without the aid of the funds derived from the Sweepstakes.

Here in Ireland, as in other countries, the voluntary hospitals faced unprecedented financial difficulties in the years following World War I (1914-1918) when sources of income by way of charitable donations, benefit functions and bequests had greatly diminished, while at the same time maintenance costs had been progressively rising. The annual deficits of the voluntary hospitals had, indeed, reached such alarming proportions that many of them were facing bankruptcy. In that period, too, both the voluntary and the local authority hospital systems were in serious need of modernisation after long years of financial stringency.

The immediacy of their deficit position led six of the Dublin voluntary hospitals to combine in the year 1930 for the purpose of running a Sweepstake to raise money to clear their debts. The organising work was entrusted to Hospitals' Trust Limited. The initial venture proved a remarkable success and an additional seventeen hospitals joined in sponsoring the second Sweepstake. Then a further eleven hospitals (making 34 in all) joined in promoting the third Sweepstake. Inside one year these three Sweepstakes had resulted in the distribution of over one and a quarter million pounds among the participating voluntary hospitals. Not only were the hospitals saved from the prospect of bankruptcy, but they could look forward with confidence to the completion of sorely-needed structural improvements and the purchase of up-to-date equipment and appliances.

In 1931 the Government passed legislation which decreed that the proceeds of future Sweepstakes should be divided as to two-thirds for the voluntary hospitals and one-third for the local authority hospitals. The allocation of grants to the voluntary hospitals was entrusted to a Committee of Reference appointed for the purpose while the distribution of grants to the local authority hospitals was left to the Minister for Health. Very many of these latter hospitals had, prior to the establishment of the State, suffered from long years of neglect. In 1933 another Public Hospitals Act was passed under which the available surpluses of ensuing Sweepstakes would be payable into the Hospitals Trust Fund under the control of Trustees and the Hospitals Commission was set up to report to the Minister for Health on applications for grants from the Fund. That system is still operating.

For the next five years the Irish Hospitals Sweepstakes continued to command widespread and increasing support not only in Ireland but in many other countries, especially in those lands where members of our far-flung race had settled. However, during World War II (1939-1945) the limitations imposed on the distribution of tickets naturally caused a diminution of the proceeds. Despite these difficulties the Sweepstake scheme maintained a fair measure of support and the hospitals benefited accordingly. It is worthy of mention here that during the war years Hospitals' Trust Ltd. also organised ten Sweepstakes for the benefit of the Red Cross and out of their proceeds help was given to deserving causes in 98 countries through the medium of the Irish Red Cross Society and its international associates.

When the war ended in 1945, the Irish Hospitals' Sweepstakes were able to advance again on a wider basis. They obtained renewed support in many countries inaccessible during the hostilities and were thus enabled to resume increased aid to the hospitals. The need for this aid was, indeed, greater than ever before because of the enormous increase (more than twenty-fold) in the annual maintenance deficits of the voluntary hospitals and because of the general rise in the costs of building construction and equipment. The tables given on pages 66-76 show how widely distributed among hospitals and other institutions were the grants from the Hospitals' Trust Fund. The magnitude of the grants is indicated in the amount of the grand total of £85,000,000 for the period 1930 to 1969.

Until the year 1970, it had been the practice to organise three Sweepstakes each year but because of the increasing demand on the resources of the Hospitals' Trust Fund it was decided to run a fourth Hospitals' Sweepstake in 1970 and to aim at continuing to do so in succeeding years. The initial venture proved successful. In 1971 a further incentive to participants in the Sweepstakes was introduced when, in addition to the usual attractive prizes, a special one of £200,000 for the first ticket drawn from the drum was offered. The winning of the first of these special prizes by a ticket holder in Canada was given widespread publicity. The indications are that so generous an extra prize will be a popular attraction for all future participants in the Sweepstakes.

There is general recognition of the enormous benefits derived from the Sweepstakes by the hospitals, as well as by other such activities as Medical Research, Hospital Libraries, District Nursing Service, etc. It is not so widely appreciated that the organisation controlled by Hospitals' Trust Ltd. gives employment to a large staff many of whom through widowhood, physical infirmity or advancing years would otherwise have found it extremely difficult to obtain work.

The drawing of the counterfolis from the Drum is open to the public and to the press. It is under the supervision of the Commissioner of Police and a Superintendent of that force is always in attendance. Winning counterfolis drawn by a panel of nurses from Dublin hospitals are handed to the Superintendent who hands them to the Public Auditors and the winning numbers are called out. Lucky winners are notified by telegram at once.

In his foreword to "Ireland's Hospitals: 1930-1955", the late Joseph McGrath, Managing Director, Hospitals' Trust Ltd., wrote: "We claim to have faithfully executed the task entrusted to us." It was a simple claim, modestly expressed, but no truer tribute could be paid to Joseph McGrath's memory. His was the decisive leadership, his the ceaseless efficiency and his the prescience in the selection and control of staff who helped him to execute the task of organising the Irish Hospitals' Sweepstakes so that their success in providing funds for the Irish hospitals is now universally acknowledged and acclaimed.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITAL SERVICES IN DUBLIN

By T. Fagan, Senior Executive Officer, Eastern Health Board

At the date of the last Census (1966), the population of Dublin City and County had risen to 795,047, i.e. an addition of 70,000 in the decade from 1956. There are proposals to hold another Census this year and the interim signs indicate a growth in population to well over 800,000. As this figure represents over one-third of the total population of the State, it follows that (apart from historic reasons) Dublin must of necessity provide comprehensive medical and hospital services on a broad basis to cater for so large a population. Historic reasons also call for facilities in the hospital field to service quite a proportion of the rest of the country, where in some areas hospital beds are at a premium and specialist services non-existent.

In this context of providing in-patient and out-patient services, an examination of the last "Return of Statistics of Participating Voluntary Hospitals" issued by the Hospitals Commission shows that of a total of 7,520 beds there were 5,640 beds or 75% provided in the Dublin Voluntary Hospitals. The same Return shows attendances at out-patient clinics to have been 2,105,666, of which Dublin accounted for 1,659,417, or over 78%. It should, of course, be noted that to these services should be added another 7,000 available beds (including psychiatric) and over 47,000 attendances at specialist clinics in hospitals administered by the Dublin Health Authority.

ORIGIN OF THE DUBLIN VOLUNTARY HOSPITALS

Historically in Ireland (as in Great Britain), it was the religious houses which mainly provided care for the sick. The suppression of the monasteries in the reign of King Henry VIII (1509-1547) put an end to that situation and only haphazard provision for the housing and care of the sick was made in the succeeding years. It was not until the end of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th that some practical attention was given to the plight of the sick poor who up to then had literally nowhere to go. In 1703 legislation was enacted setting up the present St. Kevin's Hospital in James's Street, Dublin, as a Foundling Hospital and Workhouse. Succeeding years saw some further central government interest in hospitalising the sick poor but basically little more than shelter and maintenance were provided by the County infirmaries which were set up in addition to Workhouses. It was not until 1923 that the terms Workhouses and County infirmaries were replaced by those of County Hospitals, District Hospitals and County Homes under the control of local authorities.

Reverting to the position in Dublin in the early part of the 17th century, it is of interest to recall that this was the period which saw the establishment of Voluntary Hospitals as we

know them today; except, of course, that in those early days no State funds were made available to them. Jervis Street Hospital was opened in 1718, Dr. Steevens' Hospital in 1733 and Mercer's Hospital in 1734. A number of other city hospitals were opened later in that century. Perhaps the most notable of these was St. Patrick's Mental Hospital founded in 1746 with the aid of moneys left by Dean Swift who had earlier written in a poem relating to his own death the following lines:—

"He gave the little wealth he had
To build a house for fools and mad,
And showed by one satiric touch
No nation wanted it so much."

In 1745 the world-renowned Rotunda Maternity Hospital was founded, to be followed in 1753 by the Meath Hospital which now occupies a site which was formerly Dean Swift's garden. Arthur Guinness, founder of the brewery firm, was the first Treasurer of the Meath Hospital.

SWEEPSTAKE LEGISLATION

Whereas the County Infirmaries and Workhouses were financed by taxation (State and local), the Voluntary Hospitals had to depend on donations and legacies received from charitably-disposed private individuals and on fund raising activities of various kinds—concerts, dances, etc. The political and economic upheavals of the following centuries materially reduced the flow of such moneys with the result that the Voluntary Hospitals were always functioning in a state of financial stringency. They were hard pressed to meet running costs which perforce had to be kept at a bare minimum and even then some of them were bordering on bankruptcy. Funds were urgently needed if they were to remain open for the admission and treatment of patients. The question of obtaining money for capital purposes (structural development and new appliances and equipment) was not even considered as the possibility of receiving it appeared to be too remote. At this juncture of grave financial crisis for the Voluntary Hospitals came the proposal to establish the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes which were legalised under the terms of the Public Charitable Hospitals (temporary Provisions) Act, 1930. Subsequent legislation broadened the spheres of activity of the Sweepstakes Scheme.

In all, the phenomenal total of over £90 million was collected by Hospitals Trust for Irish hospitals in the period 1930-1970.

OTHER FINANCIAL AID FOR HOSPITALS

Despite the enormous help given by the Sweepstake Funds to the hospitals, expenditure on the running costs of hospitals increased so largely that other measures of financial aid had to be introduced if the hospital service was to keep abreast of modern diagnostic techniques, the employment of paramedical aides, improvement in the remuneration of staffs, etc. The Health Services (Financial Provisions) Act of 1947 and the Health Act of 1953 both in their respective spheres helped the voluntary and local authority hospitals.

The effect of the 1947 Act was that 50% of the health expenditure of local authorities was met out of central government funds and since then certain other supplementary grants have been added. The 1953 Act, insofar as the voluntary hospitals were concerned, authorised a substantial increase in the daily capitation rate payable by health authorities on behalf of eligible Health Act patients treated in voluntary hospitals. This daily capitation rate has been progressively increased since 1953 to the current rate of 85/- per day (£4.05 in the new decimal currency) for patients in the Teaching Hospitals and somewhat less for those in other hospitals. By this measure, the acute situation in regard to the maintenance deficits of the voluntary hospitals has been considerably relieved. The current 1971/1972 estimates of the Dublin Health Authority for payments in respect of eligible patients in the voluntary hospitals amount to over £4 million. Further legislation in 1957 also helped the hospitals financially when in that year the Voluntary Health Insurance Board was set up and gave persons (especially those in the middle income group) the opportunity of insuring against in-patient and specialist services expenses. This insurance scheme has proven of inestimable value not alone to hospital finances but also to the 15% of our population not eligible for services under the terms of the 1953 Act.

CAPITAL WORKS IN VOLUNTARY HOSPITALS

As an indication of the tangible benefits (apart from deficit grants) derived by the Dublin voluntary hospitals from the distribution of Sweepstake Funds between the years 1956 and 1969, the following capital works either carried out or in the course of completion may be cited. The Royal City of Dublin Hospital, Baggot Street, got a new Cardio-Pulmonary Unit; Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital a new Pathology Laboratory; a new magnificent 455 bed Teaching Hospital has been opened at Elm Park, replacing the old St. Vincent's Hospital at St. Stephen's Green. The famous Coombe Maternity Hospital was re-sited and now has 144 maternity, 58 gynaecological and 51 paediatric beds. Jervis Street Hospital got a new Operating Theatre Suite and a Drug Addiction Unit. Of major importance in Jervis Street is the work done on renal dialysis. The former T.B. hospital of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dun Laoghaire, was adapted and extended to provide a National Rehabilitation and Limb-fitting Centre, whilst a new Central Remedial Clinic was opened in Clontarf. The specialist Cancer Hospital of St. Luke's received grants to enable Cobalt and Isotope Units to be provided. A 50 bed extension has been added to the National Maternity Hospital in Holles Street. This hospital, founded in 1894, was replaced in 1936 on its original site by an all-electric hospital and was the first new hospital built in Dublin since 1904 to that date. Many other additions and renovations, as well as installations of appliances and equipment, have been made with the aid of Sweepstake Funds in the Dublin voluntary hospitals but are too numerous to mention in detail.

CAPITAL WORKS IN LOCAL AUTHORITY HOSPITALS

It must not be overlooked that the local authority hospitals in Dublin also benefited substantially from Sweepstake Funds. The old workhouse look has disappeared completely from St. Kevin's Hospital and it is now a modern general hospital of over 1,200 beds. Many major capital works were completed at St. Kevin's in recent years, e.g. a new Paediatric Unit costing over £17,000; a new boiler house supplying steam, hot water and heat to the hospital and laundry, completed at a cost of £140,000; and very recently a magnificent staff restaurant together with an elaborate new kitchen, opened in 1970. An important innovation at St. Kevin's was the opening there in 1967 of a Nurses' Training School which now caters for approximately 144 student nurses. Current capital works in the same hospital comprise a new Day Hospital, a new Psychiatric Unit and an extension to the Maternity Department. In the old St. Brendan's Mental Hospital, structural and building operations have given the hospital a modern look in consonance with the recognised importance of environment in psychiatric treatment. In this hospital new Teaching and Assessment Units have been built at a cost of over £60,000 whilst a new 78 bed unit for geriatric patients has been provided at a cost of over £115,000. At St. Ita's Mental Hospital in Portrane a new Female Nurses' Home was built whilst St. Loman's Hospital at Palmerstown (formerly a T.B. Hospital) has been adapted and renovated to cater for female psychiatric patients and severely emotionally disturbed children.

SPECIALIST CENTRES

As mentioned earlier, Dublin houses most of the specialist centres providing a national service. To those already listed can be added St. Laurence's Hospital for neuro-surgery, the Meath Hospital for genito-urinary disorders and the Mater Hospital for heart surgery. There are also, apart from Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Dun Laoghaire, rehabilitation centres at St. Anthony's, Herbert Avenue and at St. Joseph's Unit of Our Lady's Hospice, Harold's Cross. The headquarters of many national associations are also in Dublin, e.g. The Mass Radiography Board, The National Blood Transfusion Board, The Joint Hospital Services Board, The Medico-Social Research Board, etc. There are over 20 Teaching Hospitals in Dublin and with Medical Schools attached to the two Dublin Universities and the College of Surgeons, the city may be said to provide ample facilities for the pursuit of the academic and practical careers of its doctors and nurses. In the field of medical research, many of the more important units are sited in Dublin hospitals.

TRAINING OF PARA-MEDICAL PERSONNEL

Dublin provides the national centres for the training and qualification of para-medical personnel. Courses for Physiotherapists are organised by the Dublin School of Physiotherapy, Hume Street and by the Mater Misericordiae Hospital in conjunction with the two Dublin Universities. A specialised course of training for Radiographers is directed in association with the Radiography Department of St. Vincent's Hospital. At the National Rehabilitation Centre, our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Dun Laoghaire, there has been established in recent years a training school for Occupational Therapists. Degree Courses in Social Science in the two Dublin Universities qualify those who subsequently take up posts as Almoners in the hospitals. Catering Officers and Dieticians receive their training at the College of Domestic Economy, Cathal Brugha Street. Laboratory Technicians obtain the necessary academic and practical education in our Vocational Colleges and after in-hospital training qualify in this field. The Institute of Hospital Administrators, founded in 1945, runs diploma courses in association with the College of Management, Rathmines, for the training of hospital administrators and most of our city hospital secretaries and administrative personnel are members of the Institute.

GROUPING OF HOSPITALS AND REGIONALISATION

Investigation of our hospital services and recommendations for their progressive improvement are being continuously pursued. Perhaps the two most noteworthy documents to have resulted from such investigations are the Fitzgerald Report on the Outline of the Future Hospital Services and the Health Act, 1970. The Fitzgerald Report recommends for Dublin the establishment of two major hospital groups having at least 1,000 beds each with a comprehensive range of medicine and surgery for a community service. The highly specialised and complex work for Dublin and its region is to be concentrated in these centres together with certain national services. Each of the two major groups will have associated with it at least one general hospital of 300/500 beds. Other Dublin hospitals including the Special Hospitals will have associations with the major groups. In the field of local authority administration, the 1970 Health Act will from the first day of April, 1971, divide the country into eight Health Regions, each in charge of a Chief Executive Officer who will be assisted by a team of Programme Managers and Functional Officers in co-ordinating the health services of the areas. Three Regional Hospital Boards are being set up and will be charged with "the general organisation and development of hospital services in an efficient and satisfactory manner in the hospitals administered by the Health Boards and other bodies in its functional area which are engaged in the provision of services under the Act." The Dublin Regional

Hospital Board, comprising the Eastern Health Board, the Midland Health Board, the North-Eastern Health Board and the South-Eastern Health Board, will cater for an estimated population of 1,650,000

It may, with confidence, be claimed that the existing Dublin hospital services can compare favourably with the best available in other cities and that they are continuing to develop in line with modern thought and procedures. The cost involved in their progressive development will naturally put an increasing strain on the available finances and will, therefore, require the continued financial assistance from the Hospital Sweepstake Scheme which has been so effectively provided over the past forty years. That the hospital services in Dublin today are so efficiently organised and financed, must in great measure be attributed to the vision and ability of the founders of the Hospitals' Sweepstakes.



DR. STEEVENS' HOSPITAL. Founded in 1733 by Grizel, the sister of Dr. Richard Steevens with money from his estate and built around a graceful courtyard. This is the oldest public hospital in Ireland.