

History of the Clinic

1928

The Clinic was opened by Dr Margaret Lowenfeld on 25th October, 1928, in rooms on the ground floor in the house owned by the North Kensington Women's Welfare Centre at 12, Telford Road, London W.11., and remained at this address until the 4th March 1929.

Accommodation

The accommodation when the Clinic opened consisted of one fairly large room with two doors, one opening on to the street and being wide enough to admit of the entry of prams, and the other opening into the entrance hall. A second room opened from the rear wall of this room, with a door leading on to a narrow strip of garden and a second door leading into the entrance hall. At the back was an empty wash-house (used by the Clinic as a Bio-Chemical Laboratory) and under the stairs one large cupboard where all equipment was stored between sessions.

By the end of November it was abundantly clear that this accommodation was inadequate and that different quarters would have to be sought. During November and the early part of December a number of possible buildings in the neighbourhood were investigated and finally negotiations were entered into with Miss Hence of the Quest, 85 Clarendon Road for the use of central rooms at The Quest. The Clinic was transferred to its new home.

Rent

The rent paid by the Clinic to the North Kensington Women's Welfare Centre amounted to 17/— per week (or 8/6d. per session) and the total amount paid during the time the Clinic remained at the address was £16. 17. 0.

Equipment

Playroom equipment consisted of 2 tables, 5 chairs and a certain amount of equipment presented by Dr. Lowenfeld.

Bio-Chemical Laboratory- equipment consisted of an outfit for urine testing and estimation of acid ratio.

The office was already furnished and was used as it stood. Printed Case-Sheets were used when the Clinic opened and a little later printed schedules for Psychological and Medical Notes were added (see attached).

Staff

At the opening date of the Clinic the Staff consisted of Dr. Lowenfeld and Miss Sorona Trew, B.Sc. (later M.Sc.) of Bedford College.

During the period October to December 1928, the staff gradually increased. It was very soon found that as all interviewing of parents, all correspondence, all social work, finance, etc. had to be done by Dr. Lowenfeld, as well as the training of Miss Trew, it was impossible for her to handle the children and a series of voluntary workers with varying experience in Children joined.

During November 1928, Miss E.M. Merston made an offer of voluntary service to the Clinic and was accepted as its first Secretary. Miss. Merston had worked under Dame Katharine Furse and had some experience in organisation and later had been for some years at Versailles under Gourdaieff.

During the first part of this period, no social work was done. During November, a visit was paid to the Clinic by the Secretary of the C.O.S., Miss Nixon, who became interested in the work done. After several repeated visits, Miss Nixon very generously offered to undertake the social side of the Clinic work and from this date until the appointment of a Social Worker all visits etc. were done through the agency of the C.O.S.

Parents' Dept.

It very soon became clear (see case of Mrs. Dockery) that a large factor in the psychological situation of the children was going to be presented by the psychological situation of the parents, especially where these were of definite psycho-neurotic or psychotic tendencies. An approach was therefore made to Dr. Isobel Wilson to ask her to undertake the care of the parents and to investigate the possibilities of building up a Parents' Dept. in connection with work of this kind. Dr. Wilson agreed, but the Parents' Dept. was not opened until after the Clinic moved to The Quest in January 1929.

Biochemical work during this period was carried out by Moss Trew.

Propaganda

No advertisement or propaganda work of any kind was undertaken.

Attached leaflet was sent out locally and pasted

In the windows of the Clinic and of the near by shops.

Organisations

Towards the end of November 1928 it became clear that a very much larger demand was going to be made upon the resources of the Clinic than could be handled by a small staff and some machinery of organisation must be brought into being.

From the beginning of December until January when the Clinic removed to The Quest, a great deal of work was put in to construct an official body of what then became "The Children's Clinic for the Treatment and Study of Nervous and Delicate Children".

During the previous year Dr. Lowenfeld had worked on the Committee of the New Health Association with Lady Eardley and under the Secretaryship of Mrs. Ernest Shaw and on . . . Mrs. Shaw consented to become Chairman of the Clinic, Miss Merston remaining Secretary.

The Governing Body consisted of:-

Negotiations with Other Bodies

During November 1928, the question was raised of permission for such children as were attending school to line school for the sake of attendance at the Clinic. An approach was made to the Divisional Attendance Officer and while no exemption was able to be allowed, full co-operation one given.

Dr. Lowenfeld then visited Dr. Thomas of the L.C.C. to explain the work of the Clinic and to explore the question of exemption from school for children attending the Clinic. After a long conversation, it appeared that a certain amount of suspicion had been aroused in the minds of the authorities owing to the position of the Clinic in a Birth Control building. A certain amount of fear existed in some quarters that there might be some connection between the two and the Clinic be an obscure form of birth control propaganda. For this reason also, a move to another address became important. Dr. Thomas appeared willing to accept Dr. Lowenfeld as a trustworthy physician, mainly on a account of her rheumatism work, volunteered to see Miss Paddon (of the Children's Care Committee and to ask her to assist the Clinic in every way, advising Dr. Lowenfeld at the same time to

make no official application for exemption of the children from school, as it would at present have to be refused.

On this basis the Clinic has worked until now.

Statistics

Two sessions were held weekly - on Tuesday from 10 to 12 a.m. and on Thursdays from 2 - 4 p.m.

The first case was sent by people interested in the Welfare Centre. From then, one told another.

The first cases were admitted from October 25th to December 21st, 1928.

Types		Ages
Physical	Enuresis....2	1 Child aged 2 years.
Educational	Backward...1	2 children aged 3 years 2 children aged 4 years
Behaviour	Unmanageable....2	1 child aged 5 years 1 child aged 6 years
Psycho-Neurosis	Miserableness....1	2 children aged 8 years
	General Nervousness...2	
	Fears.... 1	
Consultation	...1	1 Child aged 10 years
		10
		10

Status at Closure

Entirely adjusted.....4

Transferred (M.D.).....1

Inconclusive

Distance too far.....2

Clinic moving.....1

Child Moving.....1

Consulation.....1