

It Needed Doing, So They Did It

An informal committee of medical center employees has organized a clean-up, fix-up project that is showing results in the hospital's Receiving and Loading Dock.

"They have had the ground cleaned up around the area," said Frank Stevenson of the Fire and Safety Office. "They have designated by yellow lines on area for the laundry. They have arranged for painting the area. They have also pointed out some leaky steam valves that needed replacing."

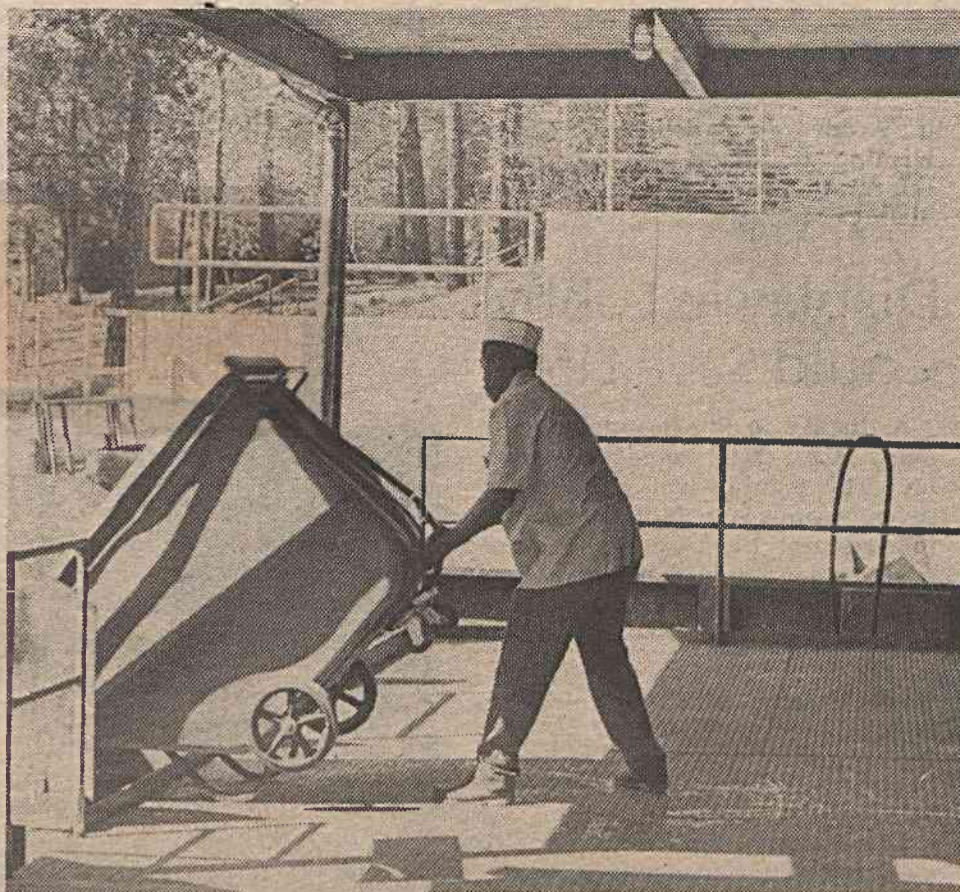
"The area is seen by patients using the back entrance to radiation therapy and by people walking or driving down Flowers Drive by Duke Gardens," said Bill Booth, material control manager for Dietary Services and chairman of the committee. "It reflects badly on the medical center for the area to be messy."

Booth said the committee hopes departments will cooperate by going through proper procedures for disposing of unneeded materials instead of just leaving them on the dock.

Suggestions for additional improvements in safety be given to the Safety Office, 684-5697, or to any committee member.

The committee includes Frank Bumphus, Central Supply; Richard Evans, Trades and Shops; James Fowler, Hospital Storeroom; Rod Hasty, Environmental Services; Sherril High, Campus Services; William Mountford, Fire and Safety Office; and Gladys Patterson, Linen and Laundry.

Luck results when opportunity meets preparation.



CLEANING UP—The hospital's Receiving and Loading Dock is cleaner and more orderly now, thanks to the interest of a group of medical center employees. (Photo by Ina Fried)

Cerebral Cortex Symposium Here Next Week

The thirteenth annual Symposium on the Cerebral Cortex has been scheduled for April 22-23, in Room 143, Edwin L. Jones Building, according to Dr. Irving T. Diamond, James B. Duke Professor of Psychology and Dr. William C. Hall, associate professor of anatomy, members of the event's organizing committee.

Dr. H. Keith Brodie, professor of psychiatry, will welcome participants when the symposium begins next Friday at 9 a.m.

The following addresses will be open to the public: Friday, April 22, 1977:

9:10 Dr. Pasko Rakic, Dept. Neuropathology, Harvard Medical School "Ontogenetic Development of Neocortex in Primates"

10:00 Dr. Ford Ebner, Division Biological Medical Sciences, Brown University "What Can Reptiles Tell Us About Mammalian Neocortex?"

11:10 Dr. Peter Strick, Research Services, VA Hospital, Syracuse, N.Y. "Motor Preparation: Influence on the Inputs to Motor Cortex and Cerebellum"

1:45 Dr. Edward Jones, Department of Anatomy, Washington Univ., St. Louis, Mo. "Cellular Organization in the Postcentral Gyrus"

2:35 Dr. Charles Gross, Department of Psychology, Princeton University "Neurons in Inferior Temporal Cortex"

3:25 Dr. Mortimer Mishkin, Research Psychology, NIMH, Washington, D.C. "A Sequential Neural Model of Higher Visual Functions"

Saturday, April 23, 1977:

9:30 Dr. Larry Palmer, Department of Anatomy, Univ. Pennsylvania Sch. of Medicine "Multiplicity of Visual Field Representation in Cat Cortex"

10:35 Dr. James Sprague, Department of Anatomy, Univ. Pennsylvania Sch. of Medicine "Cortical Areas Mediating Visual Acuity, Form Discrimination and Interhemispheric Transfer in the Cat"

11:25 Dr. Semir Zeki, Department of Anatomy & Embryology, University College London, England "The Cortical Projections of Foveal Striate Cortex of the Rhesus Monkey"

Stress Seen as M.D. Occupational Hazard

By David Williamson

During the past several years, national polls have indicated that Americans trust their physicians more than any other group of professionals.

A medical center psychiatrist believes that the need to maintain this trust places a tremendous strain on some physicians. As a result, he says, a disturbingly high and usually unreported number of them abuse drugs or attempt suicide in this country every year.

In a recent issue of *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, Dr. Bernard Bressler wrote the other doctors often compound the problem instead of helping to solve it by treating their emotionally disturbed peers "as social outcasts."

Suicides Equal

Medical School Class

"In the United States each year the equivalent of an average-size medical school class commits suicide, with the highest incidence of such suicides occurring in the decade after the completion of training," Bressler said.

"In other words, five to 10 years after they have completed medical training and left their medical institutions, the value of these highly-trained professionals is either much curtailed or wholly lost to the community."

Estimates of drug abuse and suicides among physicians vary from two to three times those for the

general population, the psychiatry professor pointed out.

Occupational Hazard

"Role strain, the result of having to perform despite admitted difficulties, is one of the occupational hazards for physicians," he said. "In contrast to subculture addiction, physicians may turn to drugs to maintain their work loads and efficiency, as a means to an end, not an end in themselves.

"Even when the physician is faced with fatigue or insecurity he feels, because of his esteemed position in the community, that he must be and appear to be energetic, competent, certain and expert at all times."

Narcotics are often used to help harried doctors keep up with excessively heavy workloads, Bressler quoted one study as demonstrating, because the outward signs of usage are less evident than alcohol.

Unrealistic Beliefs

"Another aspect of drug use by physicians to increase their work efficiency is the unrealistic belief all too frequently held by physicians that a drug such as Demerol is nonaddictive," he said.

"This resembles the illusion of many physicians that they cannot catch their patient's illness by exposure to it."

The age-old association between magic and medicine affects doctors more than they realize, Bressler



DR. BERNARD BRESSLER

suggests.

"The medicine man turned to curative herbs to supplement his very limited power of scientific observation. He used the faith his position in the tribe gave him to help his patients.

Faith of Patients

"The same holds true for the physician today," he continued. "His power, too, is limited, yet he is fully aware that his patients' faith in him is a cornerstone of the healing art of medicine, and he, too, makes use of their faith for their own benefit."

But when the young practitioner begins to see himself as the savior of mankind who must work wonders and accomplish miracles, the contrast between expectations and

reality can cause great emotional conflicts.

Fortunately, the majority of physicians are able to work through conflicts between what they want to do and what they can do, Bressler maintains. The "fairly large minority" who cannot, however, need greater support from their fellows.

"Time and time again in clinical practice, estimable and well-meaning physicians have been observed exacerbating the condition of a disturbed colleague who has made a suicide attempt by keeping quite about it and merely exhorting the colleague with a 'Pull yourself together and straight yourself out,'" the psychiatrist said.

Difficult To Seek Help

As a result, seeking the professional help he needs becomes more and more difficult and even degrading for a doctor, and the tendency to conceal or deny his condition is only reinforced.

In his article, Bressler recommends that considerably more effort be made in American medical schools to make students aware of their own vulnerabilities.

He also urges a greater selectivity in choosing less compulsive medical students, especially among those who are to pursue psychiatric training because suicide rates for psychiatrists have been estimated at two to three times those of physicians in general.