



# InterCom

## "Mr. Dukes," North Carolina's Busiest Doctor

The members of the Duke University Medical Center community realize the bigness of the hospital's Outpatient Department, but do you know that most of the North Carolinians who come here from Manteo or from the mountains feel, when they arrive at the clinic door, that they are going to "the doctor at Mr. Dukes?" Our clinic staff deserves a pat on the back for creating this very personal image to its patients, for in reality the Outpatient Department is a large and complex organization.

Since moving into its impressive new wing in 1957 the clinic's patient load has grown from about 100,000 visits per year to 140,000 during 1961. It requires a staff of approximately 85 people (not including physicians) and an annual operating budget of \$375,000 to keep the outpatient department a going concern.

Director of this department is Mr. Ralph Drake. He is assisted by Mr. Stanley Elwell, business manager of the medical clinics, and Mr. Harry Brown, business manager of the surgical clinics. It is the job of these men to keep the staff of nurses, technicians, clerks and orderlies working as smoothly as possible; to keep the patients flowing through the clinics as efficiently as possible; and to keep up with the volumes of records that such an operation entails. Responsible for the high quality of medicine offered in our Outpatient Department are members of the senior staff of doctors. Each of the 11 principal clinics (hematology, general medical, obstetrics and gynecology, general pediatrics, psychiatry, oral surgery, ENT, eye, general surgery, orthopaedic and urology) plus the Emergency Room and the Employee Health Office has its own medical director. Members of the senior staff also supervise each of the many sub-

specialty clinics with staff members, house staff and medical students rotating through the clinics to provide the physicians necessary to see the many patients.

Although the Outpatient Department is big, with an impressive array of the latest equipment and excellent doctors, it still has a heart. In talking with employees of the Outpatient Department, the concern for their patients' welfare keeps coming up again and again. It is small wonder that so many people arrive in Durham to see "the doctor at Mr. Dukes," confident that all of their problems—both physical and financial—will be solved for them! Among the staff are many old-time, truly dedicated employees whose enthusiasm and faithfulness make the unavoidable waiting time for patients more tolerable. So many of the department's staff fall into this admirable category that it is impossible to list everyone, but a story on the clinics would not be complete without a word of recognition to several.

Miss Eleanor Stubbert is in charge of the staff who interviews all of the new patients. On her shoulders falls the responsibility of deciding where the patient should go and what their financial ability to pay is. Mrs. Felcie Balance does such an excellent job in supervising the laboratory that dire consequences are predicted if she were ever to leave her job! Mrs. Iva Cain, who was transferred from nursing in the Medical Clinic to Employee Health, has done an outstanding job there of reorganization. The Emergency Room—part of the Outpatient Department—is efficiently run by Mrs. Lillian Mason who worked for many years on the ob-gyn floor. Miss Gladys Barbour, who takes the clinic patients' x-rays, is one of those unusual individuals who enjoys her

work so much that she has to be sent home once a year for a vacation. And then there is Miss Hallie Christian whom an unidentified source claims runs the orthopaedic clinic for the house staff. As long as there are casts that need to be taken care of, Miss Christian—with the able assistance of her orderly, "Buck" Patterson, is on the job no matter what the time. And finally though recently retired, all of the outpatients personnel fondly remember the many years of faithful service of Miss Lillian Adkins and Miss Jamie Niblock.

How does the Outpatient Department fit in with the other services offered at Duke Medical Center? Its purpose is to take care of patients who can be treated on an outpatient basis and who cannot afford to be cared for by the Private Diagnostic Clinics. The medicine offered here is not free, although almost all of the care is given below cost. The average collection per visit is \$2.02 while the cost to the hospital is \$6.50. This figure does not include the cost of supplying the services of the doctors. That is charged to the medical school budget. In a large part the hospital deficit is covered by income created in the private clinics. Incidentally, part of this deficit results from the large employee health service offered. Last year this service examined 900 new employees, gave employees 4000 immunizations, and was visited by employees 30,000 times.

Each new patient coming to the Duke Medical Center Outpatient Department is interviewed and a detailed family and financial record taken. This initial interview determines whether the patient can be taken care of by this department or whether he should be referred to the private clinics. Miss Stubbert could

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