

Unit Administration Pro



Unit administrator Mr. Ned Kearns meets with the others on the unit at least once a week to discuss any problems, the assignment of tasks, and any pertinent reports.

In the spring of 1964 a new sign went up outside a room on Cushing Ward. It read "Unit Administration," and it was a sign of things to come.

The "unit" was four surgical wards on third floor: Reed, Cushing, Halsted, and McDowell. The "administration" involved five individuals: a nursing supervisor, a dietitian, a housekeeping supervisor, a hospital hostess, and an administrator.

They were part of a new project, and its future was undetermined but was promising.

It was hoped that the unit would prove to be helpful in solving some of the problems being created by the rapid growth of the hospital, its increased patient load, and the increasing number of patient care services being offered.

For instance, as the hospital has grown, it has become more and more difficult to coordinate

the activities of the many employees caring for the personal and medical needs of the patient. Often several persons are found performing the same tasks, unaware of the duplication of their efforts. Primarily this is a breakdown in communications between the ward personnel.

Often, too, there are severe problems in communications between the ward personnel and administrative personnel (sometimes located several floors away).

The problems arising from these gaps in communication prove to be not only frustrating for the employees and the administration, they can also hurt the quality of patient care services being rendered.

The unit administration project was started in an attempt to help ease the communications situation by decentralizing management and trying to coordi-

Hospital hostess Mrs. Jayne Pate stops to chat with the anxious mother of a young patient and brings some magazines for her to read.



Photographs by Thad Sparks

Nursing supervisor Mrs. Sarah Jeffries (right) talks to Patricia Walsh, head nurse on Cushing, one of the unit's four wards. Keeping in touch with ward personnel is terribly important to the success of the unit operations.

