Right Guide

This column is designated to give official VA answers to veterans' readjustment problems. Send questions to RIGHT GUIDE, 1380 Sepulveda blvd., Los Angeles 25, California.

MEDICINE NOT IN BOTTLES

"If we keep them happy and their minds occupied, we can cure them better and faster."

Examples of the truth of this old saying are found in the three Veterans Administration hospitals in the Los Angeles area: the VA Center, Sawtelle; Birmingham VA Hospital, Van Nuys, and the San Fernando VA Hospital. There was a time, not so long ago, when hospitalization meant long hours of "just waiting to get well." Nothing to do but wait and think—and thinking was not good when a fellow is worried about his physical condition, his job, his family and his future. Once in a while there was an occasional visitor; less frequently a home talent show, and on special days organizations might bring moments of cheer along with old books and older magazines, but for the most part, he just lay there waiting and thinking.

Things are different today in VA hospitals—very different.

Medical attention comes first and there is a vast improvement there, too; but after admission physical examinations a veteran patient is assigned to a ward and a bed. The bed is equipped with a radio headset and he may listen to music or the hair-raising episodes of his favorite radio serial while the nurse takes his temperature.

Within 24 hours after he is assigned a bed a man with a "clip board," or a VA contact representative, brings complete VA contact service to his bedside. He checks with him regarding entitlement, changes, and eligibility under federal law benefits. More than 2,000 applications for federal benefits are completed each month by contact representatives in the three local VA hospitals in the Los Angeles regional area.

There are more chaplains in the three Los Angeles area VA hospitals today than there were in the entire VA two years back. They are all veterans themselves. They served as the patient served. Their spiritual counsel and guidance is available to patients at all times.

The Red Cross and VA social service have trained crews in the hospitals to assist with the family and personal problems. Veterans' organizations maintain staffs to serve all former service people.

Thus, all of the VA patient's problems relative to federal, state, employment, and miscellaneous benefits, as well as personal affairs, are taken care of for him. He doesn't have to worry about these things—he wouldn't have time to worry anyway. His time is occupied with other things.

Every possible type of entertainment is available. Top artists give generously of their time and ability. Games suited and adapted to his physical setup are there for the asking. Library push carts bring him the latest literature.

But the best part of all is the opportunity for vocational and academic study. Scores of veterans have finished their high school studies or advanced in technical or college courses while patients in VA hospitals. Hundreds have added to their trade and vocational skills. Many more have acquired new skills and have left the hospital better able to make a living than they were when they entered.

All of this has a purpose. From a practical standpoint it lessens hospital days because cures are effected "faster and better." From the human standpoint it saves long hours of thinking and waiting.

Veterans do not "sweat out" hospital hours any more.

More Frontage For Western Avenue Selected

The Los Angeles city council is considering the purchase of two more parcels of land for the improvement of Western Ave. from 182nd and 260th st.

The Council referred to its state, county and federal affairs committee recommendations to purchase property belonging to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Greig on the southwest corner of 254th st. for $3325, and land owned by Isabelle Lang on the southeast corner of 259th st. for $645.

Both transactions were approved by the Los Angeles Bureau of Right of Way and Land.

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