

This hospital cannot, as general hospitals, defer the admission of certain prospective patients because of staff and accommodation shortage.

In conclusion, I must thank the staff for having maintained a high standard of service, both medical and nursing, despite these difficulties.

NELSON MENTAL HOSPITAL

Dr. WILLIAMS reports:—

I have the honour to present my annual report for the year ended 31st December, 1947.

The number of patients under care during this period was 1,162. Of these 1,110 were admissions under reception orders and 52 were voluntary boarders. Admissions totalling 98 included four transferred from other mental hospitals, 37 under section 8 of the amendment of the Act, and 35 voluntary boarders. Fifty-eight, including 30 voluntary boarders, were discharged during the year. Twenty-nine were transferred to other mental hospitals. Deaths totalled 51.

Admission of children dropped to a mere trickle comparatively, because of diversion to Levin, which is fortunate, in view of the indifferent facilities here; though, otherwise, the site in Nelson has much to commend it.

The general health of the patients has been good, excepting for mild epidemics of mumps and of infective hepatitis.

Because of labour and other difficulties, which are general in the building world at present, little more than maintenance work has been possible. A number of amenities have been added, however. These include a new staff sitting-room at Nelson, washing and ironing machines, and a drying-room there also, which are most useful.

A drying-room has been installed in the nurses' home at Ngawhatu; and some improvements made to Matron's and Tutor Sisters' quarters. The kitchen at Dunoon for the male staff has been modernized and remodelled, with consequent better service. Tubular heaters were installed where required in staff bedrooms.

Fire-escapes have been added to El Nido, and a changed and improved form of fire-fighting facilities installed.

Staff changes have not been many really, though shortage on female nursing side persists. A full male staff has continued to buffer this position in some degree, and, generally speaking, we are fortunate indeed in our personnel. Their spirit is good and they have been genuinely co-operative in the best interests of the hospital and its patients.

Dr. Cameron transferred from Seacliff during the year. He is a welcome addition to the medical roster. Miss Ahlstrom has been appointed as Occupational Therapist and Miss Nilsson as Tutor Sister, and both are doing good work. Mr. Irving has been appointed Senior Clerk.

Farm activities have proceeded satisfactorily and revenue therefrom continues buoyant. Unfortunately staff shortages have persisted there, too, though the personal help of Mr. McPhail, the Farm Supervisor, and the efforts of Mr. Greig, Farm-manager, have greatly alleviated a trying state of affairs.

The amusements and recreation side has been reasonably successful.

The staff have had a monthly dance, and the annual ball was reinstated this year. Badminton, cricket, soccer, and bowls clubs have all been successful, though perhaps rather in the enthusiasm displayed than in the various championship ladders relevant.

Parties of patients have gone regularly to the pictures; fortnightly dances have been held; and visiting concert parties have been very kind also, and in this respect particular thanks are due to the Young People's Choir, and to Mr. Cole.