

Medical opportunities in the Atlantic Provinces

Following the Thirty-eighth Dalhousie Refresher Course, on Thursday, November 5, a group of physicians, specialists, residents, internes and medical students, — mainly residents of the four Atlantic Provinces, met together in a unique experiment — a panel discussion on "The Medical Opportunities for the General Practitioner and Specialist in the Atlantic Provinces." Guest panelists were:

Dr. J.M. Gillis, Chairman, Committee on Medical Recruitment; P.E.I. Medical Society:
Dr. F.L. Whitehead, Executive Secretary, New Brunswick Medical Society:
Dr. C.J.W. Beckwith, Executive Secretary, Medical Society of Nova Scotia:
Dr. W. David Parson, Honourary Secretary, Newfoundland Medical Society.

Moderator of the panel was Dr. Lea C. Steeves, Assistant Dean and Director of Post Graduate Division, Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University.

Other distinguished guests in the audience included Dr. C.B. Stewart, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Dalhousie University; Dr. C.M. Bethune, Administrator, Victoria General Hospital and President of the Grand Chapter of Phi Rho Sigma; Dr. L.G. Stevenson, Professor of the History of Medicine, Yale University, and the John Stewart Memorial Lecturer.

The programme was sponsored by one of the medical fraternities, Phi Rho Sigma, since it was the feeling that there existed a gross lack of communication and understanding between the students on one hand and the people in different Atlantic communities who are concerned with fulfilling future medical needs on the other.

The discussion was begun by each panelist explaining in as exact terms as possible, the present state of Medical Practice in his Province, listing the immediate needs, the future requirements and any other aspects of Medical Practice unique to the particular province.

Following this the panelists answered questions submitted in writing from the audience pertaining to such topics as: the attitudes of established doctors in a community to the new-comer; the methods of communication between physicians planning to return for specialty training and the graduating internes who might be interested in taking over such practices; the increasing trend of graduates doing general practice for two or three years only, and then returning to do post-graduate study; the thought of making general practice a pre-requisite to specialty training. Dr. Steeves was often obliged to call upon particular audience members to reply to questions.

It was the unanimous consensus of the provincial representatives to carry forward this form of "communication", and to extend, in future meetings, invitations to representatives of the provincial governments and hospitals.

Judging from the great amount of enthusiasm which attended this first attempt, the success of such gatherings in years to come can be anticipated with some degree of optimism, in the hope that efficient lines of communication can be established between Medical people in the Atlantic Provinces and Dalhousie Medical School. In this way it is expected that medically needy areas would have their wants met more efficiently, and graduates would have a better idea of where to begin a practice with the best hope of success.

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