MEDICAL CENTER ARCHIVES
OF
NEW YORK-PRESBYTERIAN/WEILL CORNELL

1300 York Avenue #34
New York, NY 10065

Finding Aid to the

THE RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK,
NEW YORK HOSPITAL

Dates of Records:
1912-1983

80 Linear Inches
(16 Boxes)

Finding Aid Prepared By:
Archival Staff
1987

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Provenance

The Archives received these papers on May 31, 1984 from Marjorie Jonas, the Director of the Department of Social Work.

Departmental History

Medical social work at the New York Hospital began about 1910 when the New York Hospital Training School for Nurses assigned "social service nurses" to follow-up work among the patients of the Tuberculosis and Children's Clinics. In August, 1912 this work was combined with the work of the "Convalescent Relief" to form a Social Service Department for the entire hospital under the supervision of a nurse, Hannah Louise Josephi.

That same year three women married to members of the Board of Governors, Mrs. Arthur Iselin, Mrs. Cornelius Bliss and Mrs. William Woodward, organized the Social Service Committee to assist the department through volunteer work and fundraising. This Committee was the animating force in the Hospital's social service work throughout the period 1912-1950. The members (at the time all women) established among other things a playground on 15th Street near the second location of the New York Hospital, a Milk Fund to provide fresh milk, eggs and vegetables to mothers and children, and the Day and Night Nursery where mothers admitted to the hospital for treatment could leave their babies.

By the mid-1930s, professionalization of the department had begun. A United Hospital Fund survey of the social work departments in New York hospitals recommended the replacement of social service nurses by trained social workers. Upon the retirement of Josephi in 1938, a professional social worker, Theodate H. Soule, was appointed Director of the department. The Social Service Committee continued, however, to meet the bulk of the department's operating costs, although the New York Hospital gradually increased its financial commitment to the department.

During Ms. Soule's tenure as Director (1938 -1962), the department was completely professionalized with trained social workers replacing nurses although this was not accomplished until after World War II. The department also played a larger role in the teaching of medical students through such programs in conjunction with the Cornell University Medical College Department of Public Health as the Family Health Advisors Program (1941 -1951) and the Comprehensive Care and Teaching Program (1952-1966).

As the scope of the department's activities widened in the 1950s, its relationship with the Social Service Committee became less important. In 1956 the Committee changed its name to the Women's Auxiliary (and later, c. 1975, to the Auxiliary) and made its social work interests the responsibility of a sub-committee. The department still, however, receives funds from the Auxiliary's Gift and Thrift Shops.
Ms. Soule retired in 1962 and was succeeded that year by Marjorie A. Jonas. Ms. Jonas stayed as Director until her retirement in 1984. Judith Trachtenberg followed her and remains Director as of this time (1987). The department changed its name from "Social Service" to "Social Work" c. 1971.

Researchers should note that during most of the period covered by this collection there were actually two departments of social work: the New York Hospital department (or "Main Hospital") and the Lying-In Hospital Department. The Lying-In Hospital Department of Social Work can trace its origins to that hospital's Ladies Auxiliary, founded in 1897 to assist the Lying-In Hospital's needy patients. A paid social worker was hired as early as 1898 but a full-fledged department was not organized until 1932 when the Lying-In Hospital became part of the New York Hospital. This department, which seems to have been entirely funded by the Ladies Auxiliary, had its own director and staff, its own budget and its own annual report. It merged with the New York Hospital department in 1963 but retained its own budget and its own annual statistics at least until 1972. The Ladies Auxiliary merged with the New York Hospital Auxiliary in 1977 becoming its Lying-In Committee. The records of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Lying-In Hospital, 1897 -1965 should be consulted for details about its social service work.

Scope and Content

Although the majority of these papers date from c. 1950 to c. 1980 there is material going back to the founding of the department in 1912. Its early history can be traced through the annual reports of the Social Service Committee, 1912 -1960 (15: 5-6) and the department's annual statistical reports, 1939-1977 (Boxes 1-3). There are also two interesting reports from the 1920s analyzing the social work done at the Cornell Clinic (5:9-10).

Because Social Work dealt with patients in all departments of the hospital, there is a wealth of information here on such fields as gerontology, pediatrics, and family planning. The department's involvement with the DeWitt Nursing Home, for which the New York Hospital provided medical care, is amply documented in correspondence, reports, and agreements spanning the years 1964-1979 (5:14-15; 6:1-4). There are also reports, 1967-1971, of the Elderly Outpatients Group, a discussion group for senior citizens sponsored by the department. There is also copious material on social service for children including information on the Children's Cardiac Clinic, 1939-1961 (5 :3 ) ; the department's dealings with the New York City Bureau for Handicapped Children, 1945-1977 (7:7-13); and correspondence with the Department of Pediatrics, 1938-1976 (11: 2-3). Family Planning can be investigated in files on the department's own program (6:12) and in those relating to Social Work's involvement with Inwood House and the Qualicap Clinic.

Other well-documented topics in these papers are the hospital's proposal to create a hospice for terminally ill patients and the department's relationship with the Hunter College School of Social Work, 1963-1979 and with the United Hospital Fund, 1944-
1971. There is, in addition, much material relating to the daily administration of the department including budgets, personnel material and minutes and reports of Staff Development Conferences and Administrative Staff Meetings.

Some material was disposed of while processing this collection. It included Attendance Books, 1951-1982 (4 v.) -one was retained in the collection as an example; monthly statistical reports to the United Hospital Fund which were exact duplicates of the Annual Statistical Reports; and a list of unwed mothers

**Restrictions**

Eleven folders are restricted. Generally they contain either patient or personnel material and can be examined only with the permission of the Medical Archivist.

**Subjects**

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<td>1</td>
<td>Abortion, Correspondence, Policies and Procedures, Brochures, etc., 1970-1978</td>
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<td>&quot;Account of Supervisory Program and Activities, New York Hospital Social Service Department, 1939 to 1942&quot;</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Administrative Staff Meetings, Minutes, Agenda, 1965-1971; 1976-1981</td>
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<td>Admissions Policies, 1951</td>
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<td>Adoption: Correspondence, Policies and Procedures, Statements, 1948-1952</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>American Hospital Association Study, Hospital Social Work Departments, Graphs, November 1954</td>
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<td>Annual Statistical Reports, 1939-1960</td>
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5 Consultation, Group Work, Correspondence, Schedules, 1967-1970
6 Consultation, Peer, Minutes, 1976
7 Consultation, Psychiatric, General, 1965-1967
8 Consultation, Psychiatric Outpatients, Surveys, 1973
9 "Study of Medical Social Service at the Cornell Pay Clinic," -Report of the Committee on Dispensary Development, United Hospital Fund, September 1923
10 "Report of a Committee Appointed to Consider the Social Service Activities of the Cornell Clinic, no date, but c. 1925
11 Coronary Care Unit, Proposal to U.S. Public Health Service, Correspondence, Reports, Procedures, etc., 1965-1967
12 Danziger Fund (Lying-In Hospital), 1948-1966
13 Danziger Fund (Lying-In Hospital), 1967-1975
14 DeWitt Nursing Home, Correspondence, Reports, Agreements, etc., 1964-1967
15 DeWitt Nursing Home, Correspondence, Reports, Agreements, etc., 1968

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<td>Histories and Historical Material, 1916-1979</td>
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<td>Hospice Demonstration Project, Application, January 1979</td>
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<td>Hunter College School of Social Work, Correspondence, Reports, Agreements, etc., 1963-1969</td>
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<td>International Exchange of Medical School Social Work Personnel, Committee on, 1956-1963</td>
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<td>Inwood House (Home for unwed mothers), Correspondence, Reports, Minutes, etc., 1963-1974 (Restricted)</td>
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3 Medical-Surgical Social Work Staff Meetings, Minutes and Agendas, 1974-1982
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7 Personnel, Correspondence, Requests for Positions, Organization Tables, 1945-1975
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<td>Personnel, Lying-In Hospital, Social Work Department, Correspondence, Job Descriptions, etc., 1954-1971</td>
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<td>Rehabilitation, New York Hospital, Correspondence, Minutes, Case Histories, 1952-1959 (HIPAA-Restricted)</td>
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<td>Seminar Material (Mrs. Stein), Case Histories, 1959-1960 (HIPAA-Restricted)</td>
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<td>Seventieth Street Project (Relocation of tenants on Lasdon House Site), Correspondence, Statements, Lists, 1967</td>
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<td>&quot;Social Service in The New York Hospital,&quot; October 1931</td>
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9. United Hospital Fund, Correspondence, Reports, Salary Studies, 1944-1946; 1963-1971
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Folder Description

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3. Yorkville Civic Council, Minutes, Correspondence etc., 1974-1975
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