
The Patients' Library at Cherry Hospital

Dale E. Doverspike

The Patients' Library at Cherry Hospital was established with the help of the Library Services and Construction Act in 1968. It was felt at that time that the psychiatric patients needed a place where they could read current news items, periodicals, and both fiction and nonfiction as an aid to their rehabilitation process. At the very outset of this program, Cherry Hospital sought consultation and supervisory help in establishing the library from Marian Leith, regional librarian, North Carolina State Library and Charles H. Fox, consultant, Special Services Division, North Carolina State Library. It was through their professional help that the Patients' Library got off to a very good start.

Chaplain Thomas A. Wolfe, hospital chaplain, and Mrs. Barbara Head, his secretary, were the in-house people who did the primary work in establishing the library. Grant monies along with matching funds from the state enabled them to establish the first basic library here at Cherry Hospital. In addition to the books that were purchased, the hospital through its Patients' Benefit Fund began to secure magazine subscriptions and other supplies to make the library a very functional and informative area. Many patients who have been here for a long time have ceased to be aware of current events, and this can be a problem to them when they leave the hospital. What they learn at the hospital can help in the rehabilitation process leading to release from the hospital back into the real world.

Function of the Library

We feel that it is our function in the Patients' Library to foster the growth and development of a person's totality and attitudes toward life, to aid in meeting their needs by helping them to make use of all that is happening to them, and to integrate this into their move toward health and

wholeness. The library becomes one of the arms in the therapeutic environment of meeting the total need through stimulation of their interest in the world around them. It is something that they can do on their own and at their own speed in order to become more sensitized to their awareness or lack of it in learning to cope with world problems.

As the library grew, we expanded our interests and provided greater services to the patients here at Cherry Hospital. We have established a rather large audio program where the patients can listen to stereo records or cassette tapes of various types of artists and music. We also have established some literature in large print and Braille for the visually impaired patient. In addition, we have established an "Easy Reading" library that is specifically designed for the mentally retarded and the low-level readers from the Children and Youth Unit. In this "Easy Reading" library we have such things as "Talking Books" and filmstrips which aid them not only in reading but also in their awareness of the value of reading. This part of the library is supported with record players, cassette players and various types of slide/film strip projectors.

Hometown Newspapers

Cherry Hospital is the hospital for a catchment area of thirty-three counties in the eastern region of North Carolina and a lot of the patients wish to read their local newspapers to keep up with local news. Therefore, we have written to the various areas of the eastern part of the state requesting that their local newspaper be furnished to our library so that the patients in that area can keep up with their neighbors and friends. Using this approach, we now have a rather large newspaper selection which many of the patients use on a regular basis. At the present time, we have about thirty current magazines, six or eight regional newspapers, and one of the national papers that gives both national and foreign news. In this way, the patients at Cherry

Dale E. Doverspike is Supervisor of the Patient Library at Cherry Hospital in Goldsboro.

Hospital are able to keep up with what is going on both in their local world back home and in the larger areas of the state, national and world news.

One of the goals that we try to achieve in this library is to provide a place where the patients can come and find the quietness they need to write or read and get away from the frenzied pace of the ward; a place where they can come to find themselves, to contemplate their particular personal problems; a place where they can just take time to look around and explore what is available to them in finding wholeness. Many patients in the past have expressed their gratitude for the library and the opportunity it affords them to get away from the confusion of the ward and have some quiet time where they can find some inward peace and reflect upon their own circumstances in life. We also find that there are times when they want to talk about the books and the magazines that they are reading and to do some checking on their own rational awareness of who and what and where they are in the here and now. We feel that we have provided that kind of service and continue to strive to enhance our library so that it will be more therapeutic and entertaining for our patients.

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Dr. Evelyn H. Daniel has been named dean of the School of Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill effective July 1.

A prolific author in the fields of information systems, computer technology, business management, library science and telecommunications, Daniel has been dean and professor at the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University since 1981. She has previously taught at the universities of Rhode Island, Kentucky and Maryland, and has held professional positions in school, public, special and academic libraries. She received her master's degree and doctorate from the University of Maryland, and her undergraduate degree in history from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

Daniel succeeds Dr. Edward G. Holley, dean of the school since 1972. Holley will return to full-time teaching and research.

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