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MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

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EVALUATION OF THE SEMINAR

by

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The first questionnaire showed that most people found the preliminary information, and the arrangements for hotel and travel satisfactory, with one or two unfortunate exceptions.

The told evaluation shows a remarkable consistency, in so far as the first questionnaire shows a preponderance of interest in the subject of nutrition, and the last a preponderance of comments that this subject should be dealt with in a future seminar. In so far as this subject is concerned I am afraid we have to admit that you have suffered from under-nourishment - and that your expectations have not been fulfilled. For this I take full blame, I should have gone through this first questionnaire early on, and picked out any subject which seemed to be of general interest and not adequately covered in the course of the Seminar, and, after discussion with the other consultants and staff done something about it. Instead, I relied on the "Special Interest Groups" to cover any such omission and as we now know that did not work out. I am grateful for this valuable lesson.

Your other expectations seem to have been more or less fulfilled. The subjects "Assessment of Needs", "Health Education", "Staffing and Training" were the main interests in the first questionnaire and the final evaluation expresses general satisfaction with their presentation. Those who are interested in the nursing aspects of MCH and in the subject of Environmental sanitation have been less well served, and again this is reflected in the suggestions for omissions from or additions to a future programme. The subject of Integration seems to have gone

beyond all expectations, as people found it more useful than they expected, and I think the discussion leaders, Dr. Williams and Dr. Cupic, must be congratulated on this super-human feat.

There was a high expectation of usefulness from the small group discussions which obviously was not satisfied. For example, while nine people wanted more lectures, and eleven wanted fewer, twenty wanted more small group discussions. plenary discussions seem to have been enjoyed by most people, eighteen registering a wish for more of these sessions.

It was repeatedly stressed that future seminars of this nature should be organized so that more time is available for the discussion of practical problems. Nutrition, as I have already said, was the most frequently mentioned, along with anaemia in mothers and children, records, training, medical and paediatric education, the care of handicapped children, family planning and the social problems associated with increasing industrialization. The impression grows that the most widely felt need is for something of the nature of a refresher course on a limited number of subjects, so that participants can take home factual knowledge to be adapted and applied according to the resources of each country or area of work, and that this knowledge should be gained through a well balanced programme of lectures and subsequent discussion - preferably in small groups.

To achieve these improvements something has to be omitted, and there was overwhelming agreement that visits should be reduced in number and should be selected carefully to show one example of different ways of applying the principles of MCH work, but that only one type of each should be included. Surprisingly enough, there was also a general feeling that more free time would be appreciated - twenty marks being given to this query ! Other valuable suggestions on the content of the Seminar were made - for example, that maternal health should be given as much emphasis as child health. Conflicting ideas as to the duration of the Seminar as to the number of entertainments and whether reports from countries should be presented or omitted were registered.

There were also some practical suggestions that participants should be nominated earlier, thus enabling them to receive the preliminary papers and information in time, that the lecturers and staff responsible for the conduct of the seminar should

have more time beforehand to discuss their contributions to the total programme, and that special times should be set aside, so that any one who wished to consult the consultants on matters relating to their special fields would be able to do so. One optimist suggested that a secretary should be supplied to each group and to the official rapporteur, and another that a dancing session should have been included.

May I express the gratitude of the organizers of this, and future, seminars to everyone for the care and thought given to the completion of these questionnaires - the information will be most useful in the future.