

too conservative a view has been taken of the benefits achieved. What emerges is a careful statement of the debits and credits in relation to the national exchequer, taking into account hospital and social security costs and tax, insurance and pension contributions. In the process, the earnings were discarded after calculating tax. If, however, the intention is to present the costs and benefits to the national economy, which is the term used in the paper, then it is proper to take credit for the output of the workers by way of contribution to production. It has been shown that the net direct costs are a little over £12 per patient per week, taking the cohort of 200 patients over ten years. It so happens that the notional weekly earnings, under-estimated by ignoring overtime, range during the decade from £7.74 to £12.92 for men and £6.83 to £11.50 for women. If these are accepted as a rough measure of output, then the contribution per working patient to the output of the economy goes a long way towards balancing the direct costs incurred on his or her behalf. Moreover, as the authors observe, every successful discharge carries benefits far beyond the limits of their ten year study.

The results of this research, and indeed of the work of the unique regional rehabilitation hospital at St. Wulstan's, can be placed in a wider perspective. Indications are given of various supportive measures in the community, and mention is made of Birmingham Industrial Therapy Association Ltd. This is a non-profit-making company which employs about 380 mental patients and has a record over some years of restoring workers to open employment at the rate of about two a week. This achievement, of course, owes a very great deal to the support of the Department of Employment, who second two Disablement Resettlement Officers to the factory, and also to health and local authorities. Nevertheless, the company operates on the principle that its objectives of rehabilitation are best achieved by accepting the normal commercial obligations of price, quality and service. On that basis the company accumulated funds which enabled it to add £17,000 to an interest-free loan of £53,000 made by the City of Birmingham, with repayment guaranteed by the Birmingham Regional Hospital Board, for the purpose of purchasing a factory. In other words, it is possible to claim that, within certain limitations, rehabilitation is consistent with good business performance.

The Department of Employment is now engaged in a radical review of the processes of rehabilitation, and the Department of Health and Social Security is, of course, closely concerned. The results revealed by Mr. Cheadle and Dr. Morgan in their research are an

important addition to our knowledge of the facts and a stimulus to all those people, professional and lay, who have an interest in fostering the developments which must surely emerge from the new national initiatives.

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EFFECTS OF HYPNOTICS ON ANXIOUS PATIENTS

DEAR SIR,

We agree in substance with many of the comments made by Dr. Betts and his colleagues about our paper (*Journal*, September 1974, p. 329), including their suggestion that the actions of drugs on performance are likely to be more complex in anxious subjects than in normals. With regard to their two criticisms about methods, we would say, firstly, that although it is obviously difficult to eliminate carry-over effects completely the design of this study was calculated to minimize them; and secondly, that the controversy about how best to analyse data of the sort we have presented is too long to be gone into in these columns; but it has been discussed fully by one of us elsewhere (Malpas, 1972). We look forward to hearing the results of their new experiments in due course.

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REFERENCE

MALPAS, A. M. (1972) Ph.D. Thesis. University of London.

A REQUEST FOR REFERENCES

DEAR SIR,

I should be grateful to receive details of any known references in the literature, or unpublished instances, in which the following triad may have appeared to be associated with an otherwise somewhat unexpected death or severity of illness:

1. Long-acting intramuscular antipsychotic medication.
2. Subnormality of intellect in child or adult.
3. Respiratory tract infection.

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