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E-18
June, 1955

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH
1790 Broadway, New York 19, New York

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SOMEONE WHO CARES

A New Film for Mental Health Associations
about Volunteer Service in Mental Hospitals

Produced for the Indiana Association for Mental Health, **SOMEONE WHO CARES** is a 16 mm sound motion picture, black and white, running time 22 minutes. It is excellent for use by mental health associations and various adult groups in the community who are concerned with the nation's #1 health problem - mental illness.

Presenting this film should be primarily the responsibility of the association's sub-committee on hospital volunteers of the Volunteer Services Committee since it is valuable for recruiting and orienting volunteers. The Education Committee may also sponsor showings to convey information about mental illness and phases of its treatment.

Contents of the Film

Beginning with scenes typifying the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, the film **SOMEONE WHO CARES** points out the extent of mental illness in our country today and explains that people from all walks of life can become victims of some kind of mental or emotional disorder.

Shows some of the conditions that exist in mental hospitals, such as overcrowded sleeping quarters and dark wards, and describes the monotonous, lonely days of the mental patient. In contrast, pictures the activity and liveliness in wards where a mental hospital volunteer program is in operation.

Poses the question, "Who are these volunteers?" and in answer shows at their daily work men and women who are volunteers -- the professional woman, the business man, the housewife. Samples the program these and other volunteers are bringing to mental patients including library services, games of group participation, music, and a birthday party. Interprets the program in terms of the benefits derived by both the patient and the volunteer.

Shows how prospective volunteers are oriented to the program and how they become members of an active volunteer group. Emphasizes the needs of mental patients -- from the very old to the very young -- and shows how the volunteer program contributes to the satisfaction of many of these needs. Exalts the volunteer as a friend to those in need -- the someone who cares.

Uses by Mental Health Associations

The film is valuable to:

- encourage people to offer their services as mental hospital volunteers
- show some of the ways in which individuals can participate in a mental hospital volunteer program
- show some of the social and recreational needs of mental hospital patients
- suggest the extent of mental illness in our country today.

Presenting the Film

All films for mental health audiences should be preceded by an introduction and followed by an opportunity for discussion. This film, too, would profit by such a presentation. Although its sound and sensitive contents are presented skilfully and interestingly, they do not deal with all aspects of a mental hospital volunteer program. These omissions do not represent shortcomings in the film, but rather they offer an opportunity for comment and discussion of additional details of volunteer services.

Since the film stresses how volunteers work in the recreation program of the hospital, other services performed by the men and women should be described in the discussion that follows.

For example, there should be mention of volunteers performing duties such as giving clerical assistance; helping bedridden patients; working in medical programs, such as pre and post-shock therapy; working with individual patients who have had brain surgery and need special constant attention, and post-operative education; participating in psycho-drama; working with discharged patients under the supervision of the social service workers.

It is also necessary to point out that volunteers in mental hospitals work closely under the supervision of hospital staff and serve mainly to supplement staff services. Volunteers are not used to replace staff, and this point should be presented clearly. The audience should be helped to recognize that volunteers function as valuable members of the hospital's treatment team.

In using the film, it is also important for the viewers to be advised that there should be a careful selection process for accepting volunteers in mental hospitals. Since all persons may not be suited to do individual work with patients, other opportunities for serving the mentally ill should be indicated. Factors of assignment and continuous supervision of volunteers as they function in the hospital should also be described.

Other topics that might be mentioned in the discussion include the role of the volunteer as a bridge between the hospital and the community, and the overall interest of mental health associations in volunteer activities.

Related Pamphlets to Use with this Film

For further information regarding volunteer activities, see the following NAMH publications:

Volunteers in Mental Hospitals - a review of the objectives and scope of volunteer programs in mental hospitals, plus the actual application of these suggestions in a state mental hospital.

Volunteer Participation in Psychiatric Hospital Services - a detailed organization manual and program guide.

The illustrated leaflet, Wanted . . . Your Magic, for recruiting volunteers for mental hospitals is an excellent inexpensive giveaway at meetings where this film is used.

Specific Points to Consider

Previewing a film first is a basic rule in presenting one. This permits the discussion leader to be thoroughly familiar with the contents of the film and anticipate questions.

Before the film is presented, the leader may want to introduce it with a few facts and emphasize some things to look for and think about while the film is being shown.

For a smooth-running performance, beforehand, check the projector, seating arrangements, light, ventilation, etc.

See Handbook Section E-14 entitled FILMS AND FILMSTRIPS for information on the presentation of film programs, including suggestions to discussion leaders and others responsible for such programs.

Handbook Section C-4 entitled PUBLIC MEETINGS describes how the Public Relations Committee can assist in planning a meeting at which this film is to be shown.

Obtaining the Film

The film is available for rental or purchase from the

Audio-Visual Center
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

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