

Memorandum on the Pharmaceutical Staff in the

Medical and Health Department.

The staff of the Pharmacy Service in the Medical and Health Department consists of:-

- a) in the Medical Store;
 - i) Chief Pharmacist and Medical Store Officer,
 - ii) Pharmacist and Assistant Medical Store Officer,
 - iii) Junior Pharmacist.
- b) in St. Luke's Hospital:
 - i) Junior Pharmacist (i/c of Medical sub-store),
 - ii) Junior Pharmacist (i/c of In-patients Dispensing Section)
 - iii) Junior Pharmacist (i/c of Out-patients Dispensing Section)
- c) Junior Pharmacist (i/c of Dispensary for free issue of drugs to the public),

besides a number of assistant apothecaries (compounders) working under the supervision of the above-mentioned and other qualified staff in the above places and other hospitals.

2. From the above schedule it is clear that the Junior Pharmacists are junior to no other staff than themselves. They are not supervised by higher grade pharmacy staff and they discharge on their own work required in a medicinal dispensing establishment. It is therefore evident that the designation of the post is inappropriate and may even imply a sense of degradation for the holders of these posts.

3. It is also becoming evident that pharmacists look down on these government posts and prefer to seek corresponding employment elsewhere. Efforts have been made since the middle of 1959 to fill permanently a vacant post of Junior Pharmacist on the pensionable establishment. Since then five notices have been published at various intervals inviting applications for the post

4. The second of these calls for applications resulted in an appointment being made after two of the applicants withdrew their applications. The appointed officer, however, soon applied for and received another pensionable appointment in a comparable post outside the Department.

5. With the exception of one applicant who was not considered suitable for appointment, the subsequent calls for applications produced no candidates. Besides this, there have also been moves by our pharmacists to obtain appointments to comparable posts elsewhere but which offer the better inducements of higher salary, quicker promotion prospects and last, but not least, an adequate designation.

6. Representations were made to Government in March, 1960, (letter-minute MH 1629/56, dated 8th March, 1960, addressed to the Administrative Secretary (SEC/E/322/60)) to change designation of the posts in the Pharmacy Service of this Department - asking that the posts of "Pharmacist and Assistant Medical Store Officer" and "Junior Pharmacist" be styled "Deputy Chief Pharmacist and Assistant Medical Store Officer" and "Pharmacist". Although the change involved no commitment whatever, my recommendations were never acted upon. The time is, however, fast approaching when remedial action has to be taken to ensure ease of recruitment to this Service.

7. It is understood that the Milk Marketing Undertaking had experienced similar difficulties in filling posts of Junior Analyst who are recruited from persons holding academic qualifications in Pharmacy but it appears that this difficulty has now been surmounted as a recent call for applications to the posts specified

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them as "Analysts" at a salary scale of £525-£25-£700-£30-£810. While on this point, it is also advisable to point out the anomaly existing in the salary scale of the posts of Junior Pharmacists in this Department and other comparable posts in the public service. The maximum rate of salary payable in the case of Pharmacist Analyst in the Water & Electricity Department is £785 per annum, that of Pharmacist and Assistant Industrial Chemist in the Department of Trade and Industry is £706 per annum, whilst that of a Junior Pharmacist is £600 per annum, only £100 per annum more than a Technician in the Education Department who holds no academic qualifications.

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8. To remedy the dissatisfying conditions obtaining in the Pharmacy Service, it is recommended most strongly by the Minister of Health that urgent attention be given to the change of designation of the posts in this service and to offering a more equitable salary. I had previously recommended that the post of Pharmacist and Assistant Medical Store Officer be designed "Deputy Chief Pharmacist" and "Deputy Medical Store Officer" and that of "Junior Pharmacist" be designed "Pharmacist". The salary attached to the post of Chief Pharmacist and Medical Store Officer was recently increased from £785 to £810 per annum which is equal to that of the posts of Analyst in the Milk Marketing Undertaking, and the Post and Customs Department, and it is considered only just that a revision be now made of the salary scales of all the pharmacists employed with this Department.

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In view of what is stated above, the Minister of Health feels that the question of the revision of salaries of Pharmacists in Government Hospitals should be tackled now and not wait until the salaries of all grades of Government employees are arbitrated upon.

22nd October, 1962.