

THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE
OF THE COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL, VANCOUVER

A Study of the Process of Community Organization
in the Development of the Community Information
Service and a Description and Evaluation of its
Operations during an eight month period, 1953 - 1954

by

DONALDA ELIZABETH McRAE

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ABSTRACT

The widespread use of modern media of mass communication, the growth of the profession of social work and the direct impact of voluntary and government welfare programs on individual and family life have made the ordinary citizen aware of the existence of health and welfare services in his community. This awareness, however, is often generalized and may not prove sufficient to enable a person, at the point of human need, to communicate with that agency best fitted to serve him. To overcome these barriers in communication and to provide a continuing demonstration of the existence of and the co-operation between social agencies, governmental and voluntary, many communities have developed central information and referral services.

This study seeks first to trace the development of central information services on the North American continent and in Great Britain. The process of community organizations leading to the inauguration of a "Community Information Service" in Vancouver, British Columbia, is described and evaluated, as is the pattern of administration and practice in the Vancouver Information-referral office during the first year of operation on an experimental basis.

To evaluate the role of the Community Information Service, Vancouver, a compilation of inquiries according to source, nature and disposal during an eight month period is presented and analysed. The program of the Community Information Service is studied against six developed criteria. From this basis and from the replies received from eight organizations in response to a questionnaire, reasons for and against the continuation of the service beyond the agreed period of experimentation are presented and equated. Some modifications and simplification of agency structure may be anticipated. Schools of Social Work may lay greater emphasis on generalized preparation for practice. These factors may minimize the need for referral between agencies and with it the need for central referral services. But until the movements described above become more visible, the ordinary man living in a metropolitan area may still benefit from the existence of central information-referral offices.

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CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INFORMATION-REFERRAL SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

In 1933, the Welfare Federation of Vancouver adopted as its slogan for its second annual campaign, the phrase "Someone in Need Awaits Your Deed."

In 1948, the Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, which united the former Welfare Federation and Welfare Council, appealed for community support under the slogan "Everybody Benefits, Everybody Gives."

The contrast between the phraseology of these two slogans is indicative of the changing philosophy of social work over the short span of fifteen years. In the earlier period an application for agency services implied a failure in living. In 1948, there was not only an acknowledgment of the indivisibility of the modern community in terms of individual health and security, but also a recognition that every citizen is a potential client of community health and welfare services.

One of the many devices utilized in facilitating the meeting of social agencies and this broader group of potential consumers of agency services has been the development of community wide Information and Referral Bureaux.

In June 1953, such a bureau under the title "Community Information Service" was inaugurated, on an experimental basis, as part of the central administrative program of the Community Chest

and Council of Greater Vancouver. It is the purpose of this study to examine the program of this project during its first year of operation.

THE DEMAND FOR COMMUNITY INFORMATION

A casual review of the processes which led to the establishment of this new service would lead one to assume that it had been developed almost entirely in response to needs uniquely evident in Vancouver, with little reference to similar projects in other parts of the continent or the world.

Yet even a cursory study of professional social work literature indicates that community wide information and referral services were developed in the decade 1939-1949 because of certain factors operative in varying degrees in many communities in Great Britain and North America.

Some of these factors were -

- (1) The growing acceptance of social work as a profession offering needed and acceptable services to individuals in all community groupings.
- (2) The increasing breadth and complexity of tax supported and voluntary services and benefits in the field of health and welfare.
- (3) The demand from organized labour and from industrial and business management for a more intelligent interpretation and a broader utilization of the social services which these groupings are called upon to support through taxation and voluntary contribution.
- (4) The need, during the period of war, 1939-1946, and in the post-war period, to meet the emergent welfare needs of service men, veterans and their dependents, and of citizens in certain war-disrupted communities.

As far as can be ascertained there has not been any basic or definitive studies made regarding the development of information and referral centres in Canada and the United States of America. Short articles in social work periodicals indicate that, in the North American continent, information bureaus were developed at first with a minimum consideration of the needs of the ordinary citizen. They were set up to serve the armed forces, veterans and their dependants and workers in industries related to the war effort.

Welfare Councils are a relatively new feature in the North American Community. On the whole the general public has not accepted their welfare planning function. But the repeated impact of the annual financial appeals made through Community Chest led citizens to anticipate that they might obtain from the offices of Community Chests and Welfare Councils information regarding available health and welfare services.

Even before the outbreak of World War II there are indications that Community Chests and Welfare Councils recognized this demand for general and particular information and, because of it, published Directories of local welfare agencies. Some Councils used the services of the professional social workers already on their staffs to maintain a simple service of direction and referral in response to citizen inquiries.

Information was given to those who discovered this resource, but no attempt was made, for the obvious reason of staff limitations, to publicize this Chest and Council function.

As early as May, 1925 the Welfare Council of New York initiated a study of facilities provided by social agencies for directing people to sources of help. As an outcome of this study, which pointed up the need for a general information service, a central Information Bureau was established, as a separate unit within the Welfare Council. It was staffed by professional workers and its purpose was to bring people and needed services together quickly.

Although little information is available regarding the inauguration of similar information units in other cities we know that some were established before the Second World War and that they showed "a rather haphazard growth without too much conscious attention as to the how, what or why of the service and without enough regard for community need."¹

WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES

The upsurge of industry at the outbreak of the Second World War, and in 1941 the declaration of war by the United States of America led to a more formalized organization of Information and Referral Services. From the social work literature of the time one gathers that these bureaux, like war time nurseries, teen canteens and service men's centres were set up "overnight" in answer to demands for immediate action. Study and research were limited.

¹ Buckley, Irene G. "Information and Referral - What do We Mean?" Information and Referral - A Report of Two Conferences (mimeographed) Welfare and Health Council of New York City, October, 1952.

A letter titled "Close up on War Time Community Planning" issued by the Community Chest and Council Incorporated in November 1942 states "Rapid change is becoming the rule rather than the exception in the everyday living of everyday Americans. Profound changes are occurring in the trouble areas of peoples lives which concern social and health agencies. Relief pressures are off. 'Service' is at a premium. Swift, smart, statesman-like interpretation is needed to consolidate this position. Practical procedures for systematic case finding and referral, long needed will develop -- Central Information and Referral Bureaux are a device now being tried and well worthy of experimentation."¹

Within American communities the established social agencies weakened, and yet somewhat enriched by the "reality" demands of the 1930's, stood ready to meet the diverse human needs accentuated by war time. But the people who needed their services, in this most mobile nation, often did not recognize the basic roots of their personal problems, or simply did not know where to turn in confusing new surroundings to find "The Welfare" familiar to them in their own home towns. Some, on the basis of depression experiences, could not visualize social agencies as being concerned about or helpful in solving such non-economic problems as obtaining day-care for children, budgetting a suddenly increased income, or coping with heightened family tension and teen-age delinquency.

¹ Buell, Bradley; Robinson, Reginald, "Close up on War Time Community Planning." Reprint Community, November 1942, Vol. 18, p. 4, Community Chests and Councils, New York.

To meet the needs of its citizens, the Welfare Council of Los Angeles established in 1942, as part of its central services, a Community Information Bureau. By 1944 at least six cities had similar services and the Community Chest and Council Inc., had set up a special ad hoc committee to study how community Information Services could be utilized, in getting people and services together.

By 1945, before it was possible to evaluate properly this new device in social work, American communities were faced with the problems of serving the returning veteran - a welcome, but demanding task. Despite timely warnings from the Community Chest and Council of America in regard to establishing any categorical approach in the services of information and referral, many communities, stimulated by Federal authority had established Veterans' Information Services by 1945. The Federal Government itself did not finance these bureaux. They were developed and supported locally by such groups as City and County Councils, American Red Cross, Chambers of Commerce, American Legions, individual social agencies, and Community Chest and Councils.

Within these veterans' centres, as in any other service which is set up to meet personal problems, the determining factor was qualified personnel. Apparently too often it was presumed that directors must be veterans but not necessarily social workers. The few cities which employed personnel qualified in counselling or social work and equipped with a knowledge of community resources conducted the most outstanding programs.

The problem of personnel plus the necessity of meeting the demands of the people who wished to "do something" for returned service men, and for returned service men only, are probable reasons why, in the United States, unlike Great Britain, Community Information Bureaux did not survive in any large numbers in the post war period. In 1946 under the telling title "Something for the Civilians" the Community Chest and Council Inc. announced that as part of its Veterans Information Service, Chicago had opened a Community Referral Service to direct civilians to social agencies. This was apparently most newsworthy.

Evidently several cities, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Cincinnati among them worked through the difficult process of retooling their various information services to meet general citizen needs. In 1947 there were still sufficient information services in New York to warrant the Welfare Council sponsoring an institute for information and referral centre workers. In 1948 the Community Chest and Councils of America established a standing committee on Information and Referral Services, and in the same year a session on Information Referral Service was included in the programme of the National Conference of Social Work.

EMERGENCE OF ISSUES:

A paper presented by Alfred A. Katz at the New York Institute 1947 indicates that, while central Information Referral Services were generally accepted by industry, management and community planning bodies, these services were not without critics within the established agencies and the profession of social work.

Mr. Katz in his presentation¹ was seeking to defend the right of the Central Information Service to utilize the personal interview and the case work approach to the extent of having more than one planned contact with inquirers, if deemed necessary. Working in a centre set up to serve trade unions, he stated that the personal problems of the working people were not being met to any considerable degree by existing social agencies, and attributed this in part to the resistance of working men and women to such concepts as "charity" and "relief."

He also mentioned some objections raised in regard to the function of information and referral bureaux. First, some workers "view a referral agency as dangerous" because it somehow gets over inevitably into the "service" function. Family agencies in particular have expressed the view that referral agencies encroach on their function of "general" counselling. There is also an opinion among some professional workers that the "relationship" established between the inquirer and the information worker will make it more difficult for the client to establish and maintain a good "relationship" in the service agency. Lastly, there is a feeling that this is not an always needed service, but sometimes an extra step for a client, which results in his becoming resentful.

Mr. Katz answered each of these criticisms to his own

¹ Katz, Alfred. Case Work Methods in a Referral Centre (mimeographed) Welfare Council of New York, 1947.

satisfaction, but the inclusion of these comments in a paper given at such a conference indicates fairly clearly that all information services did not arise or continue with complete support from the existing social work agencies or the social work profession.

Some, if not all of the problems of professional and inter-agency were still apparent in 1953. At the session on information services at the 1953 American Conference of Social Workers the following statements add to the problems presented by Mr. Katz in 1947.

Professionally staffed referral services have not always been used by workers in operating agencies. Referrals from central referral bureaux have not always been given the same degree of status as those coming from a "sister" continued service agency. Special barriers have been unnecessarily created in serving clients for want of enough mutual understanding and respect between the continued service agency and the referral service.¹

Despite these problems, of the several hundred information referral services which sprang up during the second World War, there were in 1953 citizen information services operative in 32 different American Communities, and at least 35 in the City of New York. Twenty of these centres are in the 35 largest cities of the United States, and the remaining 12 in cities of populations varying from 200,000 to 800,000.

Almost all centres ascribed to a similar purpose, though worded differently. They existed "to provide information about social resources, to assist people, to comprehend the complexity

1 Buckley, Irene G. What are the Special Skills Required for the Brief Contact or Referral Interview, National Conference of Social Work, Cleveland, Ohio. June 2, 1953.

of community programs." Without exception the purposes of all centres included three auxiliary aims.

- (1) To build and maintain a comprehensive resource file.
- (2) To act as a community barometer in evaluating the extent to which resources are meeting human need.
- (3) To interpret health and welfare services to the community.

FUNCTION OF UNITED STATES CENTRES.

The majority of centres operate through an advisory committee or board, and many are responsible to a parent body, usually the local council for welfare services.

Relating the Information Services to the amounts raised in 1952 in Community Chest Campaigns, it was found that 24 are in cities where over a million dollars was raised.

In 63 per cent of the total contacts of the 31 centres reporting, inquirers were given names, address and/or telephone number and description of the function of the agency most appropriate to their needs. For the remaining 37 per cent a specific agency was contacted to request exploration of the inquirer's problem.

The majority of Information Services did selective clearing in the Social Service exchange. Several centres reported the closing of local social service exchanges.

Most of the professional social workers employed in the Information Centres had other responsibilities within the setting of Welfare Councils. These included Social Service Exchange, Volunteer Bureau, Research, Family and Child Welfare Division,

Council Executive and professional consultation with special committees.

Approximately one half of the thirty-one centres had assumed other responsibilities than those falling normally within the pursuit of their common purpose. These included Christmas bureau, holiday bureau, camp referral, speakers' bureau, nursery and day school referrals, employment service for professional workers and Chest complaints.

The largest staff reporting had seven regular members and about half of the centres had more than one professional worker.

External factors which were reported as problems of many centres include lack of resources, or gaps in programs such as case work services, childrens services, psychiatric and medical resources, inadequate housing and limited social assistance programs.

The most pressing internal problem which hampered the effectiveness of Information and Referral operations was the lack of enough clerical and professional staff members to carry out an effective public relations program. The day to day demands were so heavy that time was not available for interpretation to agencies, community groups and public bodies.¹

In a later chapter there will be a discussion of the current movement towards a generic base of social work practice,

1 National Conference of Social Work, Summary of Information Centre Questionnaire, Information Centre Workshop, Chicago, 1952.

which when achieved, would greatly minimize the need for information referral bureaux. But such movements develop through long and difficult process in professional and community organization. It is sufficient in summarizing the historical development of community information services in the United States of American to affirm that they provided, at a critical point in the history of the nation, one answer to arising citizen protest against the growing complexity and categorical approach of American social agencies.

The 32 centres which have been maintained after the period of immediate resettlement may do much because of their "barometer" function to point up the absurdity of the present inadequate Tower of Babel of Welfare Organizations. Within it they at least stand as "guarantors that every person shall have access to those health and welfare services which the community affords and accepts."¹

DEVELOPMENT IN GREAT BRITAIN

The history of the development of Information Services in Great Britain has been described by such writers as Beveridge and Titmus and can be outlined more briefly.

Although, as in America, Information Services in welfare were formally organized at the time of Britain's declaration of

1. Howlett, Virginia, What are the Special Skills Required for the Brief Contact or Referral Interview," (mimeographed, symposium) Introduction, National Conference of Social Work, Cleveland, Ohio, June 2, 1953.

war in 1939, the need for such services was recognized many years before. It was met partially and spasmodically by local councils of social agencies, personal service societies, guilds of service and other voluntary welfare organization. As the British nation after World War I moved slowly but decisively from poor law concepts towards a widening social security program, the need for centralized sources of welfare information was recognized even by governmental bodies.

The Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Public Assistance Administration presented to Parliament in 1924 noted the general ignorance of large groups of British citizens in regard to available forms of assistance and deplored the discontent and bitterness resulting from actual hardship or fancied injustice. The Report recommended that

The best safeguard against the growth of such feelings probably lies in the provision of better facilities for giving advice to persons in need of it as to the general circumstances in which assistance is available from the various authorities. For this purpose, it would be desirable that there should be in every large centre of population -- some officer in a position to give reliable information -- his function to be confined to the giving of information and advice to applicants for help, of putting them in touch with the appropriate authority and of advising any agency as to the procedure to be followed in dealing with difficult cases outside its scope but possibly eligible for some form of assistance.

1

Even before the threat of war was generally recognized the idea of establishing welfare information centres was mooted in the 1936 Annual Report of the British Council of Social Services, a national

1 National Council of Social Services, Incorporated, "Advising the Citizen," Chapter 1, p. 10, London, 1950.

co-ordinating body which includes in its membership most of the voluntary welfare organizations in Great Britain.

Two years later, at the time of the Munich crisis, this same organization, at a conference of voluntary agencies called to discuss plans for the mobilization of welfare services in the event of war, drew up a plan for the development of advice services in a number of British Centres and particularly in potential target areas. These centres, to be developed under voluntary auspices and with the co-operation of diverse public and private organizations were to be called Citizens' Advice Bureaux.

In London, the Charity Organizations Society was prepared to sponsor such new centres, while in other cities responsibilities would be carried by a Council of Social Agencies or a family service agency. Since such Advice Bureaux would be needed in places where there was little formal organization of social services, the National Council of Social Agencies agreed to take responsibility for organizing and maintaining Advice Bureaux administered by ad hoc committees representative of the varying interests and organizations in an area. Such centres were to be organized by citizens for citizens and should recognize no differences of class, race or creed.

Their stated aims were

To make available for the individual accurate information and skilled advice on many of the personal problems that arise daily, and to interpret legislation; to help the citizen to benefit from and use wisely the services provided for him by the state.¹

1 National Council of Social Services, Incorporated, Voluntary Social Services, a Hand Book of Information and Directory of Organizations, London, 1948.

The universality of this purpose in terms of its application to either war or peacetime circumstances is worthy of note. The bureaux were to be dissociated from patronage, easy of access and open at convenient times. They would not give material aid.

However unprepared Great Britain may have appeared in 1939, the new conflict was an "expected war" for which governmental bodies had been preparing (on paper) since the late twenties. It was recognized that there would be an attack by air; directed, not at opposing military forces, but at the civilian communities of Great Britain. The planners were prepared to meet the problems of physical casualties and material damage. They knew that social distress comes with war but they saw this distress, not in terms of the discomfort and suffering of individuals, but as a possible cause of lowered morale and ineffective defense. It was the voluntary agencies, with their long experience in dealing with people, one by one, which affirmed that while the people of Great Britain might not need all the coffins, mental hospitals and special military "morale building" forces planned by a benevolent government, they would demand endless cups of tea, help in finding lost relatives - and pets - and someone to listen to their story of "how it happened."

By September 1940 it became very evident that, although the authorities had planned for almost every physical exigency from blankets to bomb shelters, each set of planners had proceeded as if none other existed. Yet it was estimated that the resettlement of one London family after a bombing usually involved at least six different public authorities. Public officials as well

as distressed citizens were ignorant of the location and policies of these myriad sister authorities and misdirection often led to additional hardship and frustration among air-raid victims.

By 1942 the voluntary Citizens Advice Bureaux, increased to over 600 were, with limited resources, trying to prevent such incidents as the following:

The 16 year old daughter of a widow bombed out on Nov. 17, 1940, spent the whole of Nov. 18 trying to get a few pounds for some clothes. She first went to the town hall, White-chapel, thence she was directed to 71 Park Lane, thence to Woburn Road, thence to 166 London Road, Norbury and at the end of the day had achieved nothing.¹

The public authorities were faced with many gigantic tasks, the settlement of residence responsibility in a mobile community, the evacuation problems, manpower demands and shortages. But when the bombs continued they realized they had to find the answer to two much less impressive but irritating problems:

- (a) How to convey quickly and clearly to those who needed them the facts about social help.
- (b) How to provide these facts, not in a dozen or more different places of indeterminate address but in one place, centrally located and well known.²

The method finally adopted late in 1940 was the development of governmental administrative centres and information bureaux under the Minister of Health. In the administrative centres officers of various central and local governments were assembled under

1 Titmus, Richard M., Problems of Social Policy, His Majesty's Stationery Office, London. Chap. XII, p.279, pp.2.

2 Ibid., Chap. XIII, p. 291, pp 1.

one roof. Information centres were less ambitious, and their function was to answer the questions of homeless people and direct them to resources in the community. Often because of the wealth of experience already resident in the voluntary Citizens Advice Bureaux their premises and their personnel were co-opted by government bodies. In time, the provision of these two types of centres became the duty of all borough and district councils.

Even after tax-supported information centres were established the Citizens Advice Bureaux found their work increasing. The strain of full mobilization created more and more problems of relationships and adaptation. The bearing of some new war-time regulation on a citizen's personal life, questions re compassionate leave, quarrels between tenant and landlord, grumbling regarding rationing, were some of the 8,000,000 problems presented. By 1942 there were 1074 information bureaux, and the government, in recognition of services rendered, gave them grants-in-aid amounting to between 1/4 and 1/2 of the actual cost of Advice Bureau operations.

As usual, governmental bodies had come to accept slowly, and only on the basis of a difficult experience, the concept which the small band of professional social workers had sought to interpret through the work of voluntary welfare agencies that "the individual is the focal point of all services." Officials learned that finding Mrs. Smith's aunt and Mr. Jones' dentures were in themselves aggressive steps toward victory.

Beyond the actual services rendered to individuals, the Information Centres and advice bureaux served to bring the people

of Great Britain a new appreciation and awareness of the whole fabric of human services available to them. Through the day-by-day involvement of the voluntary and statutory bodies rendering these services came a new sense of a shared basis of community concern with a resulting breaking down of the bogies of "red tape" and "vested interests".

Another ancillary contribution of the Information Centres and Bureaux came through their use of volunteers. Citizen volunteers made up from 70 to 90 per cent of bureau office staffs. Direction was always in the hands of skilled social workers and a constantly broadening program of in-service training was combined with opportunities for participation in national conferences and institutes.

This emphasis on volunteerism was of course not peculiar to the Citizen Advice Bureaux (in London alone it is estimated that between over 200,000 citizen volunteers engaged in some form of war service). But undoubtedly the Advice Bureau volunteers found new opportunities to lead and serve and were recognized as useful members of society. Such service brought to the individual volunteer a sense of purpose and helped to bring to discredit the pre-war prophesies of impending national neuroses.

Appendix BI indicates the nature of the inquiries for a twelve month period, 1946-1947, immediately after the war, at one typical urban advice Bureau. It is of interest that over three-quarters of the inquiries were in regard to situations common to war or peace. X

However, it must be recognized that, in Great Britain as well as America, Advice Bureaux were considered as "emergency" units. If that had not been so, it is doubtful whether there would have been a decrease in the number of Bureaux from over one thousand to six hundred immediately following the cessation of hostilities in Europe.

The first National Conference of Citizens Advice Bureaux was held in May, 1945. Here delegates affirmed their belief in the basic need for advice bureaux and resolved to continue the movement. This decision was based on such factors as:

- (a) The probability of a lengthy and difficult period of "resettlement" in British communities.
- (b) The complexities inherent in the practical administration of an expanded program of social security.
- (c) The possibility that families and individuals, lacking the sense of urgency and inspiration present in a time of national emergency, would no longer be able to "carry on" in the face of personal difficulties.

At this conference it was decided that Citizen Advice Bureaux should seek to maintain their status as a voluntary service. They would preserve their right to advise the citizen in his best interests, and the freedom to raise issues with any body, statutory or private. Such freedom pre-supposed the removal of grants in aid and the development of independent voluntary units under the Council of Social Services.

In keeping with this declaration, national government grants in aid were withdrawn in 1951, although some two-thirds of the Citizens Advice Bureaux are given token financial support by local authorities. The remainder of their budgets are supplied

from voluntary contributions.

In comparing the development of American and British Information, it is apparent that they were both stimulated by the current situations outlined on page 2; the growing influence of professional social work, the development of social security programs, the need for general interpretation of welfare services to important, unrelated key groups of citizens, and the impact of war.

Basic differences in their development and philosophy and practice were:

(a) Pattern of Planning

The American services were developed, one by one, on the basis of local need, with little or no reference to national social work planning, and without state or federal recognition. There is not much evidence to point to local agency involvement in their early development. The British Information Services were one facet of a total program of mobilization, and were set up with the support of the National Council of Social Services, with the co-operation of key social work organizations, and with recognition from local and national public authorities.

(b) National Organization

Up to 1949, there was only a minimum effort to co-ordinate or standardize the local community information services in the United States; British Advice Bureaux were autonomous bodies locally but were from their beginning affiliated with each other through a central committee of the National Council of Social Services.

(c) Recognition by Public Authorities

In America, only that part of the function of information centres which related to services to veterans was ever recognized officially by governmental bodies. The British Advice Bureaux voluntary agencies were the pattern on which public information services were founded and, in some cases, these Bureaux were used as the base for a public-private information service. Recognition of the value of Citizens Advice Bureaux was shown through generous grants in aid to the parent body, the National Council of Social Services.

(d) Use of Volunteers

There is little evidence of volunteers playing any crucial part in the actual operation of American Information Services; and some warnings against such practices is found in current literature. In Great Britain the majority of Citizens Advice Bureaux workers were volunteers.

(e) Training

America did not appear to offer any special training for Information workers. This is to be understood if one accepts that, in theory, if not in practice, all information service workers were graduates of schools of social work. Moreover, there was apparently no movement within American schools of social work to define and develop new techniques in short term counselling -- the type of professional service usually demanded in information bureaux. In Britain, where training is dependent on fields of professional service, it was easier to develop local and national programs of in-service training, conference and institutes. In

addition, several training manuals were developed. The most comprehensive was "Advising the Citizen" a text book which included descriptions of community resources, a review of the historical background of British social work, and papers on administration, interviewing techniques, statistical compilation, and relationships to other community services.

(f) The right to give "authoritative" answers.

Both public and private social agencies in North America had been unanimous in claiming that the direct service agency alone is in a position to decide through an "intake" process the eligibility or suitability of an individual client. Therefore, referral workers in central information services were limited to indicating to the inquirer that a certain agency was willing to explore his problem.

Since social services in Canada and the United States are administered on three levels -- municipal, state or province, and federal -- and since programs and policies are different in each municipality and each state and province, it is virtually impossible for a central information service to give authoritative information to an exceedingly mobile citizenry.

In Great Britain, where there are only two levels of government and where most services and benefits are rendered on the basis of recently re-defined statutory rights, Citizens Advice Bureaux have quick recourse to legislation and regulations. The basic text book of the British movement illustrates this in the chapter subheadings, e.g. "The Ministry of Fuel and Power, the Ministry of Pensions, The Ministry of Health, Local Authorities." To outline

in a similar concise manner the basic legislation and regulations within the three-level pattern of the American and Canadian Public Welfare Services would be an impossible undertaking.

REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES

Information and Referral Services are comparative newcomers in the Welfare pattern of Great Britain and America. To gain needed acceptance they must be evaluated from two viewpoints:

- (1) To what degree are they recognized and used effectively by the general public?
- (2) To what degree are they accepted as a proper setting for the practice of social work, by social agencies, and by the professions?

The answer to the first question appears on the basis of statistics to be an affirmative one. The second question is still unanswered. To gain professional recognition it must be proved that "brief interviewing techniques" may be used to the advantage of inquirers. And this proof must be related to the fact that social work is somewhat of a competitive arena where at present, with inadequate budgets and insufficient staff, there is not in any community enough direct services to meet acknowledged human needs. Can "Everybody" really benefit?

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE PROCESS OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL OF GREATER VANCOUVER, 1953

THE SETTING, THE COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL

The process of community organization within a Council of Social Work is seldom well recorded. Because such Councils are usually the most comprehensive social planning body in a city there are, at any given time, many projects at different stages of planning and achievement. It is difficult to abstract from the whole interwoven program the history of one development. This is certainly true in regard to the early history of the growth of the idea of an information and referral service within the Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver.

In 1930 the Council of Social Agencies was established almost concurrently with the fund raising body, the Welfare Federation. These two bodies which were latterly known as the Welfare Council and the Community Chest amalgamated under the title "Community Chest and Council" on July 21, 1946.

In the first report of the Social Planning section of the amalgamated organization the idea of a Referral Centre was mooted. The Vice Chairman of the Social Planning Section, Mrs. Gordon Selman, reports

This year we must seriously consider the establishment of a Referral Centre in Vancouver, a downtown, central, ground floor information bureau to which any citizen may apply and from which he may be referred to the

proper agency for his particular need. The Social Planning Committee has made some study of the question, but the cost seemed prohibitive at the time; however, we must not give up until all possibilities are explored for the establishment of this centre, which would be of great benefit to the city."¹

The cost of such a centre seemed to be a real problem. In the introduction to the 1946 Annual Report the proposal to establish "a referral centre as a public service" is not listed as one of the "Plans for 1947" but in a less possible grouping, titled "Looking Forward". The Annual Report of 1947 indicates that this X project was still definitely on the planning board with no indications of its inauguration. "The referral bureau mentioned last year has not yet materialized."² In 1948 there is once again the pessimistic note "So far we have failed to establish a referral centre."³

This rather definite admission of failure seems to indicate that in the years before 1948 the need for an information referral centre had been affirmed within the Council and the project approved in principle, if not in financial backing, by the Community Chest. It may be advisable to review the earlier developments and ascertain the degree of consideration afforded this project.

DEVELOPMENT OF A REFERRAL CENTRE, VANCOUVER, 1940

The records of the Council of Social Agencies indicate,

1 The Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, 1st Annual Report, 1946, Vancouver, February, 1947.

2 Ibid., 2nd Annual Report, 1947, Vancouver, February, 1948.

3 Ibid., 3rd Annual Report, 1948, Vancouver, February, 1949.

surprisingly, that not only had the Council considered setting up such a service, but that in 1940 an Information centre was actually operated in the Dominion Bank Building, Hastings and Cambie Streets, under the direction of a social case worker.

It has been stated that unlike the planned efforts to develop Citizens Advice Bureaux in Great Britain, American Information Referral Services "just grew." In contrast the first Vancouver project literally "burst" into being. In February, 1940 the Council of Social Agencies received a letter from the Vancouver Branch of the Canadian Red Cross Society complaining that civilian requests for material assistance at its office were so heavy that the efforts of the society were being diverted from its primary function of war service.

Within two short weeks several committees had met and in March, 1940 a plan for the development of a Referral Centre in the downtown area, on a temporary basis, was completed. A secretary was employed, facilities set up, policies decided upon and financial backing arranged. The Committee regretted it had not been able to complete the last detail, "volunteer workers to man the office during the secretary's lunch hour."

The City Social Service Department carried the major costs of the project assisted by the Council of Social Agencies. The function of the Centre was totally referral. Each of the 286 cases dealt with in the six months of operation were listed as "referred from Agency 'X' to Agency 'Y'." The service was used by case work agencies, organizations with non-social work staff,

hostels and churches. All cases, while undoubtedly presenting personal, medical and psychiatric problems, had within them some element of financial need. Some of the problems studied and later brought to the attention of the Council of Social Agencies were lack of case work service for single men, hardships accentuated by residence and responsibility legislation, effects of the depression on morale, need for better inter-agency referral procedures, need for mutuality between churches and social agencies.

The Centre was closed in August, 1940. In his summary report, the secretary appears very complacent about this closing, presuming that the six months operation had greatly improved referral procedure, and citing the establishment of a Men's Service Bureau and the decentralization of the City Social Service Department as other factors making unnecessary further operation of the service. The distribution among committee members of a short article by Linton Swift of the Family Service Association of America, which states that some information bureaux assume the role of authoritative "intake" for agencies, seems to indicate that private agencies were, as in America, fearful of the Bureau becoming another "agency". Actually, it did in some degree, for the Men's Service Bureau embraced similar work with the same personnel and to some degree, the same sponsorship.

OTHER WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS

There seems to have been little interest in information services until 1944-1945 when several letters were directed from the Welfare Council to other councils inquiring about Information Services in American cities. Neither Board of Directors nor

Executive minutes show the reason for this revival of interest. However, there was at that time an advisory group to the Council called the "Executives Conference" with a membership made up of the employed directors of many of the larger and more influential agencies. In 1944, the executive Director of the Welfare Council brought to this group the suggestion that a referral agency, information desk, or centre was needed, particularly to assist returning veterans in using community resources. A small committee was set up to clarify the possible functions of such a centre and to obtain background information.

In 1945 the small committee reported that there was a need for a central information bureau, primarily set up to serve veterans but extending its work to include civilians if necessary; this bureau to be under the auspices of one of the following bodies -- The Rehabilitation Council, The Welfare Council, or an existing social agency.

Eventually this Bureau was set up in the old Hotel Vancouver and existed for three years under skilled social work direction, with the sponsorship of the Citizens Rehabilitation Council. Its work was limited to services for returning service men, women, and their families.

In 1945, after the closing of this centre, the chairman of the Social Planning Committee reported that she had met with citizens prominent in the work of the Rehabilitation Centre to discuss the possibility of establishing an Information Centre in Vancouver. The general opinion of the Social Planning Committee was that such a centre was needed. Another conveyance of letters was directed to American centres, to the Toronto Council of Social Agencies, and

to the Canadian Welfare Council, but the crucial problem of financing the Centre was not approached directly.

Nothing further came of this endeavour except the references to an Information Referral Centre included (as cited before) in the Annual Reports of the Community Chest and Council for 1946, 1947, and 1948.

COMMUNITY DEMANDS FOR AN INFORMATION REFERRAL CENTRE

In October, 1949 the Social Planning Committee authorized the appointment of a small committee to bring in a report on the need for a referral centre, its function and its personnel. No action was apparently taken, but in September, 1950 The Institute on School, Health and Social Services, a group of school administrators and social workers, proposed in a report to the Social Planning Committee that some method of guaranteeing authoritative referral of school children to proper agencies be investigated. In 1948-1949-1950 there were also several reports that Division Secretaries, and in some cases the Executive Directors of the Community Chest and Council, were spending as much as 50 per cent of their time interviewing persons coming to the Community Chest and Council office for referral and advice.

In 1950 a private citizen, apparently not known within Community Chest and Council "circles", wrote to the Executive Secretary of the Welfare Section enclosing an outline of a proposed National network of Information Services throughout Canada. The writer stated he had been referred to the Community Chest and Council and the Department of Health and Welfare, Province of British

Columbia. The enclosed outline emphasized the following points:

(1) That the proposed Information office should be very broad in its function - not limited to health and welfare but in a position to give accurate information regarding "a variety of subjects, not presently available in Canada, including educational services, scholarships and bursaries, general taxation, income tax, new legislation."¹

(2) That while the service will concern itself ONLY with direction, for the inquirers who "expect the world to adjust to them" a LITTLE experienced advice would go along with the required information.

(3) That such a service would ease "congestion, friction and loss of time" in direct service agencies.

(4) That an Information Service would, if established nationally, be helpful in wartime or other national emergency.

(5) That such a service should be established under the "umbrella of the Canadian Welfare Council or Department of Civil Defense."

(6) The local Information centres would be practically autonomous, working under the management of a "Local Management Committee" representing all key groupings in the community.

(7) Each centre would include in its employ, volunteer worker-teams drawn from the professions, industry, trades and businesses.

While the student may be curious as to motives, it is interesting to note that the citizen proposing this project states "I take a particular interest in such a plan because I had the privilege of organizing such a scheme on a national scale in France and Germany."²

In reply to this letter, the Executive Secretary told of the consideration of such a project in Vancouver but stated firmly

1 Watkins, G. C., Letter to F. I. Jackson, Executive Secretary, Council Section, Community Chest and Council. Undated. Acknowledged April 19, 1940.

2 Ibid.

that committees within the Community Chest and Council were inclined to emphasize the social work function of such a centre and the necessity, therefore, of staffing the centre with professional workers.

On February 21, 1951, the matter of an Information Centre was once again brought to the attention of the Chairman of the Social Planning Committee by letter. This time, the writer while defining his status as "an interested individual" was a person very active in community planning, a board member of a financially participating member agency of the Community Chest and Council, and above all, a person known to work quietly, doggedly but with success on behalf of "causes" whose financial demands often appeared over-ambitious to public officials and budget committees.

This letter reiterated the need for such a service, mentioned the development of the first Canadian Referral Service in Toronto, and cited from personal observation the permanency and the value of the British Movement of Citizens Advice Bureaux.

Two suggestions in this letter probably account for the serious consideration given it by the Social Planning Committee.

(a) "if because of budgetary limitations (within the Community Chest and Council) the necessary funds cannot be made available from normal sources, steps (should) be taken to raise additional funds from other sources."¹

(b) "Since the services of the Information Centre would be available to all citizens and since it would relieve City Departments of a number of inquiries, application might be made to the City Council for a grant."²

1 Stratton, P. R. U., Letter to Dr. E. Murray Blair, Chairman, Social Planning Committee, Community Chest and Council, Feb. 21, 1951.

2 Ibid. :

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE TO STUDY NEED FOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Somehow this letter produced action. The Social Planning Committee "remembered" its previous authorization of a study of the need for an Information Centre, and asked for a report as soon as possible. To quote the minutes of the Social Planning Committee,

A letter dated February 21st, 1951, suggesting the establishment of an Information Advisory Centre by the Community Chest and Council was read. It was recalled that at a previous meeting a committee had been authorized to consider the question of establishing a referral bureau, but this Committee had not been convened. It was decided to set up this committee and give consideration to the original suggestions and to those contained in Mr. Stratton's letter, the committee to report back as soon as possible.¹

Once again, after endless postponements, on May 19, 1951, the process of community organization as it concerns an information referral centre was revived.

The Executive Secretary in issuing the call to this committee defines its terms of reference as "to report back to the Social Planning Committee on need for an Information-Referral Centre, its function and personnel."

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

A Committee of six was set up. It was chaired by a citizen volunteer who had served in an executive capacity with the Canadian Red Cross Society, and the Community Arts Council. Her committee of five was made up to two lay members, the citizen who

¹ Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, Minutes, Social Planning Committee, May 19, 1951.

had brought the matter of an information referral service to the attention of the Social Planning Committee, and a gentleman who had served as both a volunteer and employed staff member in organizations concerned with the problems of housing and treatment of alcoholism. This second volunteer was also very active in church circles.

The three other members were professional social workers, one from the faculty of the School of Social Work, University of British Columbia, one from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and one from the City Social Service Department. In addition, the Community Chest and Council staff was represented by the Executive Director, the Secretary of the Social Planning Committee, the Public Relations Director and the Secretary, Family and Child Welfare Division.

While the President of the Community Chest and Council and the Chairman of the Social Planning Committee were ex officio members of this committee, their activity belied their traditionally "dormant" role. They were full working committee members and lent great stability and status to the group.

One of the obvious weaknesses of the original committee was the absence of persons representing the key financially-participating agencies of the Community Chest and Council -- family, childrens' and groups work agencies. They would normally provide the most important referral resources for the proposed centre and without their co-operation the project could quite easily become another "emergency relief" centre. It is generally conceded that this was a serious mistake, which though remedied, had some detrimental effects.

First Committee Meeting

In preparation for the first meeting, the Executive Secretary distributed a statement as to the function of the committee. "The first business of the committee will be to determine whether there is a need for an Information Referral Centre in Vancouver. If the establishment of a Centre is warranted the committee will be expected to report on such matters as the auspices -- the personnel required, the location and accommodation of an office, budget requirements.

In addition the Executive Secretary had written for information regarding similar centres established in Toronto, Ontario; Boston, Mass.; Columbus, Ohio; and Milwaukee County, Wisconsin. A summary of the replies received was forwarded to committee members with the notice of the meeting.

At its first meeting, eleven of the twelve members were present. Background material, as circulated, was reviewed. There was unanimous agreement that an Information Centre was a desirable development. The whole committee were of the opinion that:

(a) the projected Information Centre should be so financed that "it be not so deprived as to be self defeating.

(b) that it should be inaugurated on a definitely experimental basis and

(c) that it should be administered by a widely representative Advisory Board or Committee.

Suggestions were made but not finalized in regard to the need for ground floor premises, "top quality" employed personnel, the possibility of evening hours and the exclusion of the

word "referral" from the title, but not from the function. There was a definite difference of opinion regarding the administrative setting, some seeing the new Centre as a part of the Community Chest and Council, others as an independent agency. On the basis of the progress made at the first meeting each committee member agreed to work alone or with others in preparing statements to be studied at the next meeting on such aspects of the Information Centre as services, financing, personnel, advisory committee and public relations.

The minutes of the second meeting are not available but apparently the proposed reports were received and from them a report to the Social Planning Committee was compiled. In the interval between the first meeting and the meeting of the Social Planning Committee the Chairman interviewed the Executive Director of the Family Welfare Bureau, the Assistant Director of Health and Welfare Services, Province of British Columbia, the Administrator City Social Service Department and a leading business man and service club member.

Report of the Committee, to Social Planning Committee

On June 19, 1953, exactly three months after its authorization, the Committee on the Information Referral Service, through its chairman presented a report to the Social Planning Committee (see Appendix).

It is apparent that the Committee had, in two full meetings and other consultations strengthened their original conclusions and worked out, to their own satisfaction, most of the questions

upon which there had been, at the first meeting, some difference of opinion. There remained, however, some few points on which a choice of solutions was given.

The first part of the report sets forth the need for such a centre and refers to the place such a service holds in the welfare setting in certain British and American cities. The second part of the report is made up of recommendations and "suggestions". In some cases it is difficult to differentiate between these two ways of presenting desirable procedures.

Principal Recommendation

The most definite recommendation is "that an Information Referral Centre be established under the sponsorship of the Community Chest and Council" (with a brief delineation of its purpose and function).

Auxiliary recommendations and suggestions are:

Administration

(1) That the centre be administered through an advisory committee of twelve to fifteen persons appointed by the Social Planning Committee.

In this regard there is a "suggestion" that eventually it might be deemed advisable to make the Information Referral Service a "department" functioning as the Public Relations Department does, directly under the Board of Directors, Community Chest and Council.

In order to point up the necessity of this committee being widely representative of the community, the report suggests the names of fourteen persons as potential committee members. According to Community Chest and Council practice these persons

would serve as individuals, not as official representatives of organizations. But it is of interest that the list included persons active in the following agencies and community organizations: trade unions (both C.C.L. and T.L.C.), the Junior League, the Town Planning Commission, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the School of Social Work, University of British Columbia, and the Family Welfare Bureau, the Metropolitan Health Committee, the Alcohol Research Committee, the City and Provincial Welfare Department, the City Council and the Y. M. C. A.

Quarters

(2) That the Information Referral Centre be housed in a downtown office, in or near the Community Chest and Council building, on ground floor level.

Finances

(3) That outside sources of funds be explored in setting up the centre, and that such approaches for sponsorship be limited to persons and individuals "where contributions to the Community Chest Campaign would not be prejudiced."

(4) That the centre should be started on an annual budget of \$7,800.00

Staff

(5) That while a staff of three persons, Director, Assistant Director and secretary-stenographer were felt to be needed, that operations might begin with only a Director and clerical assistant.

Desirable qualifications for the Director were outlined, the committee stating that first choice should be given to a social worker, with at least two years experience, holding a degree of Master of Social Work. Failing this, the committee would consider a Bachelor of Social Work with four years experience, or a

social worker without a degree but eligible for membership in the Canadian Association of Social Work, with five years professional experience.

A description of the qualifications of the secretary-receptionist indicated requirements equal to a private secretary.

Motion, Social Planning Committee

The Social Planning Committee received the report and acted on it through the following resolution:

That Mrs. Eastwood, and the Committee on Information Referral Centre be congratulated for an excellent and extremely expeditious undertaking and, if the recommendation of this Committee is approved by the Executive Committee of the Social Planning Committee, that the Board of Directors be requested to authorize the setting up of an Information Referral Centre according to the terms and budget recommended by this Committee.

Social Planning Committee Action on Report

The minutes do not record any discussion in the report. The Executive Committee, meeting on June 25, approved the recommendation that an Information Referral Service be established and moved that the report of the Information Referral Committee be presented to the Board of Directors, Community Chest and Council, "without reference to budgetary problems." It was further suggested that the proposed centre be titled not Information-Referral but Information Centre. This action was taken at the first meeting of the newly authorized Executive Committee, a group which had not formerly considered Social Planning business. It is interesting that such an important decision should be forwarded to the Board of Directors without further study at this level.

PRESENTATION OF REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On June 26, 1951 the Social Planning Committee presented the report on the Community Information Service to the Board of Directors, Community Chest and Council. The Chairman of the Social Planning Committee summarizing the lengthy report, emphasized three factors:

(1) The usefulness of such a centre to the citizens of Vancouver.

(2) The relief which such a centre would afford the professional staff of the Community Chest and Council.

(3) The public relations value of such a centre to the Community Chest and Council.

The Chairman of the Social Planning Committee explained that: "it was proposed to set up such a centre on a one-year experimental basis, the estimated cost of \$7,800.00 it was hoped could be raised from interested service clubs, and if it proved as useful as anticipated, the cost of operation would be included in the 1953 budget for Chest administration."

The Board approved the proposal for setting up an Information Centre in accordance with the suggested plan and authorized the special Referral Centre Committee to raise the necessary funds within the limits outlined in the plan.

SITUATION, JUNE, 1951.

In the first period, the committee on Information Referral Services finally succeeded, after long and sometimes quite questionable delay by other persons, in putting before the Social Planning Committee and the Board of Directors a picture of the

potentialities of a Community Information Referral Service. In achieving this in three brief months they were not able to utilize the full strength of community planning as much as might have been desired. While recognizing their achievement we cannot say that it was "a continuous process of social planning in which agency interests join in finding the facts of human need, in establishing priorities regarding such and delivering the most effective way to organize the services involved."¹

With the Board of Directors meeting on June 26, 1951 the first period of community organization ends. The Board had approved in principle the idea of organizing an Information Referral Service under Community Chest and Council auspices if funds were made available from non-chest sources. As far as one can ascertain no one had been authorized to find out whether and where such funds were available in the community. The Board itself assumed no responsibility.

SUBSEQUENT SOCIAL PLANNING ACTION ON REPORT

In September, 1951 the Chairman of the Social Planning Committee reported to that body that no definite progress had been made in obtaining funds to finance the Centre. She pointed out that approaches to individuals at this time of year might be misconstrued and affect adversely the 1952 campaign opening on October 1st.

¹ Association Press, "Towards Improved Chest-Council Agency Relations," Pamphlet, p. 27, New York, 1951.

No further mention of the proposed Centre is found in Social Planning records until January, 1952 when, in discussing a memorandum from the chair, circulated before the meeting and discussed fully, the following statement was made:

The Chairman said that to the best of her knowledge the Social Planning Committee had not had the opportunity to decide whether top priority should be given by Council staff to the interviewing and referral service now being given to people who drop into the office - the information and referral service recommended by the Social Planning Committee and agreed to by the Board of Directors had not been set up - no adequate method of financing. The Committee on an Information Referral Centre has recently reconvened as a ways and means committee - exploring possible means of raising the necessary money. In this connection the Board of Directors had approved the appointment of a case worker to assist in the Family and Child Welfare Division - with primary responsibility for interviewing all applicants for assistance.¹

In February, 1952 the retiring chairman, in her last summary statement, urged the Social Planning Committee to continue to press for an Information Referral Service.

On March 17, 1952 the Social Planning Committee appointed a woman as a member to the Information Referral Committee (where she had previously sat in an ex-officio capacity), and gave the Chairman power to appoint such other members as the committee might deem advisable.

DEVELOPMENTS AT COMMITTEE LEVEL

Meanwhile, there is some point in explaining what was happening to the project on committee level. Any activity would be surprising since to all intents and purposes the committee as

1 Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, Minutes, Social Planning Committee, January, 1952.

a study group would normally disband when its report was presented. But, as indicated above, it had become more than a study committee and its members were not satisfied to "retire" until they had at least explored the possibilities of finding financial backing for the project now approved in principle by the Board of Directors.

In September a letter was written by the Chairman of the Social Planning Committee to the President of the Junior League enclosing twenty copies of the report to the Social Planning Committee. Between then and November 12, the Chairman of the Committee on the Information Referral Centre, addressed the Board of the Junior League. On November 12, another letter from the Chairman of the Social Planning Committee to the League, gave certain details regarding the project. It may therefore be assumed that although there was no formal request for funds, the Junior League was considering sponsorship of the project. The League officers had apparently asked for answers to certain specific questions

- (1) Was the total budget of \$7,800.00 necessary?
- (2) Could the services of the Information Referral Office and the Volunteer Bureau be merged?
- (3) Could Junior League volunteers be used in the Centre?
- (4) How long would the Junior League be committed to financial support of the proposed centre?

The Chairman, in reply, indicated that

- (1) Certain economies were possible if facilities for the centre could be obtained in the Community Chest and Council office.
- (2) Any combination of the resources of Volunteer Bureau and proposed centre were not advisable.

- (3) A "limited number" of Junior League volunteers could be used depending on the capacities of the director and the space available.
- (4) It was understood and accepted by the Board of Directors, Community Chest and Council, that the full cost of the Information Centre should become part of central administrative charges of the Community Chest and Council within two years from its inception at the latest, provided it proved its value and usefulness.

In the December, 1951, copy of News & Views, the official magazine of the Junior League of Vancouver, a report on Board action states "agreed that the Referral Centre should not be taken on as a major project and that a token donation is not advisable at this time."

Once again the Committee appears to have "gone underground" for a few months. There are indications "off the record" that the refusal of the Junior League, while disheartening, was not acknowledged as final. There are also indications that agencies previously not involved in the Information Referral Committee had some concern lest projects already "on the books" for Junior League consideration might run into competition with this new Information project which to date had not reached the ears of agencies directly.

VISIT OF NATIONAL SECRETARY, FAMILY WELFARE ASSOCIATION, AMERICA

The next meeting of the Committee in March, 1952 centred on the purpose and function of the proposed centre. A field representative of the Family Welfare Association of America was in Vancouver for an agency visit and arrangements were made for her

and the executive of the Family Agency to meet with the Information Referral Committee and advise the members on the success or difficulties encountered by similar organizations in the United States.

Five members of the original committee of six, plus two representatives of the Community Chest and Council staff, were present at this discussion on March 12, 1952.

The field consultant brought forth the following points:

- (1) There is danger of such a centre becoming another case work agency.
- (2) This danger is minimized if it is a part of the central resources of Community Chest and Council.
- (3) Kept within limits it might be useful to the community.
- (4) The centre should be considered first in terms of its value to citizens; the public relations value accruing to the Community Chest and Council, because of this service is a secondary consideration.
- (5) The centre should not be set up "on crutches" but should be properly staffed by a faully qualified person and have adequate facilities and equipment.
- (6) If the agencies in the community are convinced of the need of such a service, the money needed would be forthcoming.

After the committee had shared its report with the guest the meeting focussed its attention on the problem of fund raising, discussing in particular the matter of further interpretation to the Junior League. Recognizing that any approaches to community groups for financial sponsorship must be made with authority it recommended that the Social Planning Committee be requested to reinstate the group as "The Committee on the Information-Referral Centre."

The remarks of the visiting authority in regard to agency involvement in the planning of such a service had apparently struck home for two plans relating to member agencies of the Community Chest and Council were approved:

- (1) That the report of the Committee on the Information Referral Services should be presented in as palatable form as possible to the only two bodies where agency representatives, as such met within the Community Chest and Council,
 - (a) at functional divisions of the Council Section (formal voting representation from member agencies)
 - (b) at the president's Coffee Parties (informal fact-sharing, semi-social gatherings attended by executive directors and presidents).
- (2) That each member of the committee should approach several executives of the larger Chest agencies informing them of the proposed project and the intention of the committee to discuss this at Divisional meetings.

Equally significant was the decision to invite the executive directors of the Family Welfare Association and the Y. M. C. A. to join the group and to assign to two committee members the responsibility for recruiting other members who would be representative of key community interests.

EFFORTS IN INTERPRETATION TO AGENCIES

The Social Planning Committee reinstated the Information Referral Committee in March, 1952, giving its chairman power to add members as needed. The Committee met again immediately this authority was given. Five new members had been added, the senior administrator in the Nursing Services of the Metropolitan Health

Committee, the newly appointed President of the Community Chest and Council (ex officio), the executive directors of the Children's Aid Society, the Family Welfare Bureau, and of the Young Men's Christian Association. The committee (1) advanced the plans for presentation at divisions and presidents' coffee party, and sought (2) to clarify the relationships if any, between the proposed Information Referral Centre and an Information Centre on alcoholism then under consideration by the Health and Auxiliary Division. Work on these two problems was continued at the April meeting.

In planning for the presentation at the coffee party two of the newly appointed private agencies' representatives brought forward the following new ideas in regard to the proposed centre.

(1) The suggestion that the agencies require a clearer delineation of the total services of the Council to its members (in other words, why try to serve us in a new way when you have not perhaps given even the traditionally anticipated leadership?)

(2) The suggestion that such a centre might well be set up in an agency which had already great experience in referral.

(3) The suggestion that if the centre were set up within the Community Chest and Council, agency staff might be "borrowed".

One of the highlights of the whole committee process came when a member who had previously been much concerned that private agencies be consulted by the committee asked what information Community Chest and Council member agencies might want presented at the proposed coffee party.

The answer (quote) from a member of a private agency

staff was:

A statement of safeguards to be adopted in seeing that the project was carried out properly -- there was a fear lest some agencies would shirk responsibilities and "shunt" people elsewhere.

Further queries were: Would contacts with agencies be by telephone? and would the centre be open at night?

As the committee made plans for both the coffee party and the Division meetings it faced the questions "Why have these gatherings of agencies? What can these groups do about the Information Referral Centre?" While recognizing that to establish a centre the support and acceptance of the financially participating agencies was vital the committee was faced with the fact that the project had been approved by the Board of Directors. The report was final and it was being presented to the agencies not for approval, but for further suggestions as to its implementation.

JUNIOR LEAGUE DEVELOPMENTS

At the close of the meeting the Chairman stated that the Junior League was setting up a Project Committee to evaluate, in light of community need, all projects brought forward for League sponsorship. The Project Committee wished to confer with the Information Referral Committee. The Junior League President had suggested the name of a member who might represent the League in the Information Referral Committee. The chairman was authorized to follow up this suggestion.

PRESIDENT'S COFFEE PARTY

The proposed coffee party was held on April 25, and the committee members summarized the report under the following headings:

- (1) Need for the service
- (2) History of the project
- (3) Function
- (4) Personnel
- (5) Review of type and number of requests for referral services received in October and November, 1951.

Questions and comments from agency representatives included:

- (1) Need for accurate recording and reporting in proposed centre.
- (2) Can agencies already working under extreme financial limitations realistically accept more referrals? (estimate that each of cases cited in (5) above, would cost some agency, even on an emergency basis about \$30.00).
- (3) Possibility of meeting needs of newly arrived citizens.
- (4) Question as to the effectiveness of Information Referral services in other communities.
- (5) Had consideration been given to making funds available to one of the large case work agencies to rent ground floor facilities and enlarge staff to do this service?
- (6) One representative of group-serving agency said that such a centre would not help them. How will we educate public to the worth of this extra expenditure?
- (7) One representative hoped expenses would be kept very low.
- (8) One representative referred to a current "advice" program on the air and said he had no doubt of need of such information service or of the availability of funds to support it.

The President agreed to have reports sent to all agencies and at the May 19 meeting of the Social Planning Committee, the following resolution was passed

That representatives of agencies present at Division meetings (when Information Referral Service was discussed) report to their Board of Directors; and after further discussion submit the decision of the Board directly to the Information and Referral Centre Committee as well as reporting their decision at the next meeting of the Division; the representatives of public departments to do likewise after discussion with the heads of their departments.

DISCUSSIONS AT DIVISIONS

Between May 13, 1953 and June 16, 1952, members of the Information Referral Committee presented their project by panel discussion to the functional Divisions. A summary of the questions and comments at these meetings showed the following reactions from representatives of member agencies in the Family and Child Welfare Division, the Group Work Division and the Ex Service Divisions, the Health and Auxiliary Division.

The Family and Child Welfare, the Ex Service and the Group Work division went on record as approving, as a group, the establishment of such a centre according to the terms outlined in the report. The Health and Auxiliary Division did not record a vote.

As far as can be ascertained from correspondence files, only two letters were received giving formal approval to the inauguration of the Centre, these being from two very small agencies, the Volunteer Bureau and the Housing Association.

PRO

1. Centre would save time and create better feeling.
2. Would be valuable to employers.
3. School administrators might be interested.
4. Possibilities of research - Pointing up unmet social need.
5. Possibility of good use of volunteers.
6. Encourage agencies to sharpen intake policies.
7. Would be of good use to veterans.
8. Would relieve Division Secretaries of interviewing work which diverted them from their proper function.
9. Would be in a position to bring matters of social need directly to social planning committee.
10. Might lead people to recreational services at a point where it is not too late to involve them in meaningful group life.
11. Would give particular services to business, industry and trade unions.
12. Would reach groups reluctant to explore the welfare services.

CON
(including doubtful)

1. Has need for Information Referral Centre been evaluated in comparison with other social agencies.
2. Would the Information Referral Centre give better service to the community?
3. Why create a new agency instead of expanding existing agencies?
4. Would people with recreation and art questions be referred to Community Arts Council?
5. Why would people know about Centre more than an agency?
6. Would it prevent social agencies from making their own referrals?
7. How would centre staff learn ramifications of veterans legislation?
8. Should not such a centre be at a heavy traffic point - Granville and Georgia?
9. Would centre give specialized services already available in established agencies?
10. Would require very clear picture of function.
11. Information centre could report on recreation, might be equally well given by any agency with well equipped leadership.
12. Could recreation agencies, on limited budget and staff accept large numbers of referrals?

TWO INFORMATION CENTRES: RELATIONSHIPS

At the next meeting of the Information Referral Committee, the second problem regarding the apparent similarity between the two Information Centres was discussed with representatives of the Committee on Alcoholism, and it was decided that the two Centres were in no way similar and that they should be presented to the agencies as separate projects.

In June 1952 the Committee reconvened to review the support received to date. It was agreed that approval had been gained from the coffee party, the division, and from a few agencies, as well as in a public opinion poll conducted by the Public Relations Department in which the project had fifth place (27.7%) in citizen support. A circular was prepared to be sent to agencies.

NEW PLANS FOR FINANCING

In looking for financial support for the project the following ideas were brought forward.

- (1) Approach the Chest for funds
- (2) Start project on a smaller scale
- (3) Have Chest assign a worker to do interviewing in Chest and Council setting.

It was finally decided to re-approach the Junior League and then circularize the agencies giving information

- (1) re financing,
- (2) re formation of Centre.

At this point, a proposal instigated by the Health League was brought forward by the public relations director, namely that the Information Referral Committee should operate a trial Information Centre Booth at the Pacific National Exhibition. A great deal of work went into investigating this proposal which was deemed unpolitic at the time.

In August, 1952 requests for financial sponsorship were made to the Vancouver Rotary Club and the Junior League. There are indications that the President of the Community Chest and Council made personal representation to both groups.

The committee as such did not reconvene until January 5, 1953, at which time it was announced that the Rotary Club would make \$2,500.00 available to the Information Referral Centre, but that it must be started by March, 1953. A personal donation of \$200.00 was reported.

The Junior League had been asked to donate funds covering the salary of the Director of the Centre. Since even with Junior League support there apparently would only be \$6,000.00 instead of \$7,800.00 available, economy measures were discussed.

NEW PLANS FOR FACILITIES

In regard to facilities, two suggestions were made:

(1) That the offices in the Community Chest and Council now rented by the Corps of Commissionaires might be made available, and (2) that it might be possible to acquire quarters in the building occupied by Health Unit 1, Metropolitan Health Committee. This was a particularly interesting suggestion as it

might have led to City involvement in the project. However, since these quarters are located on the "skidroad", the office intake would have been materially affected. It was the general opinion that the Community and the Junior League would favour a Chest centred office.

EMPLOYMENT OF STAFF

In regard to personnel there were suggestions that a director might be obtained on loan from an agency or department, or that skilled volunteers might be interested in giving their services. It was agreed that a person should be employed on a full-time basis by the Community Chest and Council and paid from funds collected and that this person, man or woman, should be interested in community-wide services.

Two resolutions were passed

(1) That the Committee proceed at once with the establishment of an Information Referral Centre and that

(2) Whatever offices which would be made available by Community Chest and Council should be utilized.

In regard to the choice of a director and the supervision of the person employed, a slight disagreement arose. One member felt that the Director of the new Centre should work under the supervision of the Social Planning Committee. Since this is contrary to the administrative policies of the Community Chest and Council it was agreed that, while the Information Referral Committee through the Social Planning Committee might recommend the names of possible staff members, a final decision regarding the employment of a social worker and the subsequent relationships of that worker to the Community Chest and Council, was the

responsibility of the Executive Director under authority from the Board of Directors. It was therefore agreed that one professional member of the Committee would receive names of prospective Centre Directors.

TWO PROJECTS BEFORE JUNIOR LEAGUE

To date there had not been a project in direct competition with the proposed Centre. But now, when almost half the funds needed were available, a proposal in regard to another needed service was made to the Junior League and the Social Planning Committee.

A group of case workers representing the Community Chest and Council and the family agency and group worker from two neighbourhood houses had been meeting for several months discussing how case work services could be made more readily available to families primarily related to the neighbourhood houses and frequently unwilling or unable to utilize needed referral to a family agency. The proposal was that some additional staff be added to the family agency in order to provide case work services within the neighbourhood house structure, and in consultation with social group workers on the staff of the neighbourhood houses.

This project had not been "aired" at the Group Work Divisions, but had been discussed at the Family and Child Welfare Division. It was unfortunately presented late in the meeting and the professional workers speaking of it were not given adequate hearing. However, the Social Planning Committee went on record as congratulating the Committee and suggesting that if the Junior

League did not give it support, these agencies find some other way to finance it. At the same meeting it was reported that the Information Referral Committee was approaching the Junior League for funds, and that with Rotary Club support guaranteed, definite plans for establishing the Centre were under way.

JUNIOR LEAGUE SPONSORSHIP GRANTED

On March 3, at a meeting of the Information Referral Committee, the Chairman announced the Junior League had agreed to pay the salary of the Director of the projected Information Referral Centre for a twelve month experimental period and that a sum of \$6,100.00 was now available. The President of the Community Chest and Council had been instrumental in interpreting this service to the League.

ADMINISTRATION FACILITIES, PERSONNEL

It was decided that, since the Centre would operate as a direct service of the Council Section, an Advisory Committee should be authorized by the Social Planning Committee, and the Centre staff, like the Social Service Index staff, would be supervised by senior officers in the Community Chest and Council. The offices then occupied by the Corps of Commissionaires on the second floor of the building, but outside the general Community Chest and Council office had been made available for the Information Referral Centre.

The question of personnel was discussed at length. It was reported that four names had been brought forward for

consideration.

In discussion the following points were raised:

(1) That a male director might achieve better relationships with business, industry and trade unions.

(2) That community experience was a major consideration.

(3) That the position should be advertised in the daily press and in notices to the member agencies, Community Chest and Council.

(4) That the Canadian Association of Social Workers Placement Service might be consulted.

In regard to committee personnel it was recommended that the present committee should be enlarged to include one representative each from the Rotary Club, Junior League and the two trade union councils. At the next meeting the selections committee reported that a total of five applications had been received and that the committee recommended that the application of the present Group Work Secretary of the Community Chest and Council who held a Bachelor of Social Work degree, and who had worked for six years in Vancouver, be accepted. The decision was not unanimous, one member suggesting that in view of the fact that a new Executive Director of the Community Chest and Council was to come into office in two months, the appointment be delayed. Records are not available regarding further discussion but it was finally moved, seconded and carried that the report of the Selections Committee be accepted.

PLANNING COMMITTEE BECOMES ADVISORY BODY

All members of the original committee agreed to act, if requested by the Social Planning Committee in the Advisory Committee

of the new Centre.

Subsequent to the official opening of the Centre, in June, the following matters of policy were established.

(1) That the name of the Centre should be "The Community Information Service."

(2) That all Health and Welfare agencies public or private be given formal notice of the opening of the Centre.

(3) That the secretary should make appointments to interview as soon as possible the executive officers of key health and welfare organizations.

(4) That a sub-committee to establish a statement of policy be set up.

(5) That the question of using volunteers from the Junior League be explored.

The Centre was opened for services on June 9, 1953, and opened formally on June 17, 1953.

SUMMARY: COMMITTEE PROCESS TO JUNE, 1951

In summarizing the process of community organization in the first period, March 19, 1951 to June 26, 1951 the following factors merit comment:

Urgency of Producing Report

The Committee on the Community Information Service was set up with some degree of hostility and certainly its members were made aware that they must act quickly and decisively. Several key volunteers in the Community Chest and Council were distressed that this project, which had been given priority on paper, had not, despite Social Planning authorization, ever received serious consideration by a sub-committee.

Strength of Committee

This urge to bring forth a definite report as soon as possible explains to some degree why some very necessary elements of community planning were missing in the process of the first study committee. Despite this, the fact that the group of twelve persons representing very diverse professional and personal interests could produce such a report indicates to some degree the validity of their cause and the leadership inherent in the group.

Lack of Agency Involvement

The "missing link" in this first period of study is the involvement of the member agencies of Community Chest and Council. Except for interviews between the Chairman and representatives of four key groups, no effort was made to ascertain if the member agencies saw the need for this service or would give it the co-operation so vital to its success.

One senses that the twelve members of the committee became so convinced of the value of the projected centre that, instead of presenting a basic report for study by divisions and agencies, they instead became an action group, interested chiefly in obtaining the financial support of the Board of Directors in inaugurating a centre immediately.

Since, from the beginning, consistently limited Chest funds indicated that financing such a centre might affect adversely the budget of member agencies, it is difficult to understand why no financially participating agency was represented even informally on the initial committee. While recognizing that such a centre

would utilize all community resources and call for close co-operation with public agencies, it does not appear realistic to put planning responsibilities into the hands of persons professionally related only to such organizations as the City Social Service Department, Department of Veterans Affairs, School of Social Work and Community Chest and Council. Why were not the Family Welfare Bureau, the Children's Aid Societies and the Christian Associations regarded equally as sources of recruitment for membership on this Committee? Did the originators of the idea fear vested interests in the private agencies, or were they over-anxious to relate the project to non-chest agencies, some of which were at that time not too adequately involved in the social planning function of the Community Chest and Council?

If it were not possible to recruit professional people it might have been feasible to have board members from financially participating agencies on the initial committee.

Evaluation of Committee Recruitment

The ratio of volunteers to professionals in the original committee of eight members is fair; five to three. But the addition of four members of the staff of the Community Chest and Council puts the balance in favour of the employed group. While one can understand that such a project is of vital importance to (a) The Board of Directors, (b) The Social Planning Committee, (c) The Family and Child Welfare Division, and (d) The Public Relations Department, it still does not seem an economic use of staff to have four employed persons representative of three groupings on such a sub-committee. One person, sharing reports on the

progress of the committee with other staff members, should have been adequate. More important, this multiple staff representation might have weighed decisions heavily and whether they did or not, their committee activities would, one would think, prejudice the opinions of financially participating member agencies not represented on the committee.

Emphases in Presentation to Social Planning
Committee and Board of Directors

It is apparent that there is some change in emphasis between the report of the Study Committee to the Social Planning Committee and the Social Planning Committee report to the Board of Directors Community Chest and Council.

The Study Committee in its report to the Social Planning Committee emphasizes the general need for such a service. No mention is made of the fact that for many years the professional staff of the Community Chest and Council had been rendering services similar to those offered in an Information Referral Service. In the report to the Board of Directors this fact is given first emphasis. The public relations value of the Centre is mentioned briefly in the original report but stressed in the presentation to the Board of Directors.

ACTION AT SOCIAL PLANNING LEVEL

One would also question whether a matter of such importance as the inauguration of a new central service should not have been held over until a further meeting of the Social Planning Committee, rather than be sent forward for Board consideration

"if approved by the Executive Committee, Social Planning Committee." Campaign budget deadline was no doubt the reason for this treatment, but the immediate approval of such a service after only a three month study period now appears over-optimistic and premature. Certainly the Study Committee was originally asked only to "study and recommend."

SUMMARY OF PROCESS, SECOND PERIOD

In summarizing the second period of activity of the Information Referral Committee from March, 1951 to March, 1953, the following factors appear important particularly in light of the first year's experience in the Community Information Centre.

As in the first period, the strength of the original committee and the ability of the lay and professional members of that committee to work together as a group was remarkable. Faced with failure and considerable opposition, the Committee seemed to "fade out" on several occasions only to appear at crucial moments to renew their efforts. There were apparently strong bonds established. One notes that the Committee frequently met outside the Community Chest and Council in most comfortable surroundings and that food was served!

Since the Board of Directors did not assume or officially delegate responsibility for exploring community resources for financing the project when it gave it approval in principle, the project would not have developed if members of the original committee had not assumed responsibility for raising funds to support

it. By their enthusiasm they had persuaded the Chairman of the Board of Directors to be their most powerful spokesman in this regard.

Because the Social Planning Committee had not, in 1951, any policy on priorities for proposed services, there arose a rather unfortunate situation in which two, if not more, Chest and Council related projects were seeking Junior League financial sponsorship. This must have been very uncomfortable for the Junior League. More serious, the eventual acceptance by the League of partial responsibility for the financing of the Centre has undoubtedly prejudiced certain personnel against the Centre. It is difficult to understand why the Social Planning Committee faced with the information that two Chest and Council related projects were before the League, could not, as the most comprehensive planning body, establish priorities and prevent two groups of citizens competing seriously for League backing. It should have been possible to decide whether the Case Work & Group Work project, or the Information Centre, was most needed. The selection was aggravated by the fact that the Executive Director who was to present the Neighbourhood House Plan to the Social Planning Committee was not permitted to present the report until nearly midnight.

The Committee on the Information Referral Service seemed to realize after their report reached the Board of Directors that they had not involved Chest Agencies enough in their preliminary study. At each meeting after this some steps were made to remedy

this situation. A visiting national field worker was consulted, interviews with key agencies were planned, written material was sent to agencies, and then the project was presented to member agencies at a President's Coffee Party and meetings of the four functional divisions of the Community Chest and Council. Most important of all, the committee gradually (and as far as can be ascertained, skilfully) co-opted persons who represented key financially participating agencies, and the Junior League.

Some of the representatives on the committee and some of the agency representatives attending the five large meetings were negative or at least doubtful in regard to the proposed centre, although recommendations of support were given in each instance by the group as a whole. But since the project had Board support "in principle" the expressions of opinion were not considered, one would gather, too seriously.

Out of forty-four agencies it is significant that letters of endorsement were received only from two agencies. This might well have occasioned a pause in planning. It is unfortunate that the agencies which did not approve "in principle" did not write to differentiate their opinion from the other silent agencies who probably only feared further sharing of the shrinking Chest dollars.

The idea of placing the Information Service within an operating agency was brought up frequently, but the lay members would not consider it. Apparently they were of the opinion that, since the reason for projecting this Centre was in part because

the general public did not always turn to the operating agencies, to place the Centre in such an agency would defeat the original idea.

The method of choosing the Secretary for the Centre is not considered in detail but there is sufficient evidence that, while the choice made was satisfactory to some members of the Committee, Social Planning Committee and Board of Directors, there was definite hesitation on the part of some of the professional workers in key agencies and the Community Chest and Council. A different choice might have related the Information Service more closely to the highly specialized agencies. Statistics show that the present centre is more closely linked to the community and to organizations with non-social work staff than to professionally-manned agencies.

In summary, the second period of organization was extremely satisfactory in comparison with the first period, both in terms of committee activity, financing and involvement of agencies. Had not the process of decision been weighted by the "approval in principle" of the Board of Directors, the Centre might have achieved the acceptance described by Miss Parsons of the Family Service Association to the Information Referral Committee. "If the agencies are convinced of the need of a service the money and the service will both appear."

CHAPTER III

THE ADMINISTRATIVE SETTING OF THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

It is proposed in this chapter to describe the administrative setting of the Community Information Service, its facilities, its intake and recording procedure, its resource files. In addition, there will be an elaboration on the use of volunteers, the public relations program, the rôle of the advisory committee and the relationship of the Community Information Service to its parent body, the Community Chest and Council.

PHYSICAL SETTING

For the greater part of the first year of operation, the Community Information Service was housed in two small offices on the second floor of the Community Chest and Council building, thirty-two steps up from street level. These two rooms were adequate in terms of privacy for interviews and were cheerfully decorated. However, two factors limited the usefulness of the original premises; first, the long climb to the office, and second, its limitations as a setting for volunteer service. Here the volunteer and the receptionist-stenographer, whom she was supposed to relieve, occupied adjacent desks in one small room. Certainly there were advantages in this propinquity, but the secretary-receptionist was not free to work uninterrupted at pressing

clerical tasks, and the volunteer did not have to assume any real responsibility in answering telephone calls, handling resource files or receiving persons coming to the office.

In May, 1954, at the request of the Advisory Committee, the Community Chest and Council granted the Community Information Service the use of the front portion of the mezzanine floor, with reception room, interviewing and typists' offices, eleven steps from street level in premises formerly rented to the Department of Justice (Western Remissions Service). Other offices on this floor were set aside for the Volunteer Bureau, the Library, and the Division for the Guidance of the Handicapped. Two signs on street level and door lettering enable the public to find their way to the office. As in the temporary quarters upstairs, the new headquarters are tastefully and comfortably furnished.

Telephone service is an important factor in an information-referral office. The Community Information Service telephone number is the same as the Community Chest and Council, but the Community Information Service will be listed twice, once under its own name (with note "see Community Chest and Council") and once under Community Chest and Council. There is one line from the switchboard, Community Chest and Council, with two instruments, one in the reception room and one in the interviewing office. In addition, there is an unlisted number which is used only for outgoing calls. This is particularly helpful as it enables the worker to call agencies or the Social Service Index without blocking incoming calls. As outgoing calls outnumber incoming calls,

this extra telephone also relieves pressure on the overloaded switchboard of the Community Chest and Council.

OFFICE PROCEDURE AND PRACTICE: POLICY

Shortly after the Community Information Service was inaugurated a small Sub-Committee on Policy was set up. It has presented to the Advisory Committee a tentative report. This report was based on a similar statement received from the Seattle Referral Centre. There are indications that this statement of policy, which was not wholly acceptable to the Advisory Committee, will require alteration and extension before it will be a useful guide in professional practice and administration.

An outline of the procedures followed in the Community Information Service office with reference to this tentative policy may be helpful.

Aims of Community Information Service

The five stated aims of the Community Information Service, as set forth in the first report of the original study committee, and still in force, are:

- (1) To give accurate information to any individual or organization on the health and welfare and related services in the Greater Vancouver area.
- (2) To refer persons to the proper source of service.
- (3) To direct people who wish to offer their services in the health and welfare field to the proper agency.
- (4) To accumulate data which will show where needed services are lacking or inadequate.
- (5) To prepare and maintain a directory of health, welfare and other community services for distribution in the

community.¹

Reception of Inquiries

Inquiries are made at the Community Information Service by three media, by telephone (57.7%), in person (35.7%), by correspondence (8.7%).

Inquiry Memo Pads

Each inquiry when received is noted on a small mimeographed memo sheet (appended), with headings for the date, the initials of worker or volunteer, the type of inquiry (telephone, interview, letter), the name, address and telephone number of the inquirer and, if applicable, the name of the person on behalf of whom the inquirer is calling. Space is left for a brief description of the nature of the inquiry, the disposal of the inquiry and for any follow-up required. "Follow-up" may mean another telephone call, an appointment, a check of resource files, or a call to an agency or the social service index. When the inquiry is not one that can be answered from resource information available, or where there are indications that an interview or telephone conversation with the social worker might be helpful, the memo is given to her immediately, the call transferred and/or the person introduced. Ordinarily, as few as possible questions are asked the client by the receptionist or volunteer.

1 Community Chest and Council, Vancouver. "Report on An Information Referral Centre," June 18, 1951.

Experimental Face Sheet

During the first few months of operation, the social worker did not use a "face sheet" form in interviews. In the fall of 1953, because of the increase of requests for direction in situations involving emergency financial assistance, a special form was worked out. This form, which is appended, proved so useful that although the heading has not been changed, as it should be, the basic information is generally found necessary in almost all interviews and many telephone calls. In addition, long-hand notes are often needed to complete the description of the inquiry. These notes, plus the information obtained on the face sheet, are the basis for the compilation of short card records. Records are filed on all inquiries where individual problems of health, family and personal relations, employment and financial need are indicated.

Short Records in Card Index

The completed records indicate the name, address, telephone, date of birth, legal residence, religious affiliation, family pattern, occupation and unemployment insurance status, regional number if any, for each inquirer with a specific social welfare problem. An analysis of the situation as seen by the worker is given; Social Service Index registration is noted, but not itemized. Direction and referral is indicated and any agency report-back included. In the eight months under study card records were filed on approximately 900 cases.

In the case of persons presenting problems suggesting the necessity of referral, a check of this card file is made in

order to discover if the inquirer has used Community Information Service services before, and if so, what resources were used.

Inquiries directed to the Community Information Service may be divided into two categories (a) requests for general information and (b) requests involving specific direction or referral of a person to a social work agency or other community service on the basis of the problem presented by that particular individual, or by someone on his behalf.

General Information Services

In regard to the first type of inquiry, listed as "General Community Information" by tentative policy and in practice, the following principles are followed:

Choice of Possible Resources

(1) Direction in regard to general inquiries is given in such a way as to provide every possible choice of community resources without endorsement or criticism of any particular service. A beginning has been made in compiling, frequently on a geographic or social area basis, lists of various resources according to function, e.g. camps, pre-school centres, organizationally sponsored accommodation for elderly people, service clubs, recreation and group work services, parks and playgrounds. These are not generally distributed widely to individuals but names, contacts and telephone number of several may be given from them if requested. They are forwarded to agencies, on request.

Contacts with Non-Social Work Organizations

(2) Since it is not possible for the Community Information Service to keep abreast of all the various welfare and money-raising projects of fraternal, civic and service groups, inquiries regarding the authenticity of such projects are referred to the group itself by giving the name of the contact person known to the Community Information Service. Since such groups change officers at different periods of the year, it is customary to answer such calls with a reply such as "The latest information we have is that Mr. -- is the person to contact regarding this project. He may be able to advise you further."

Queries re Organizational Standards of Service

(3) When faced with a common question "Which is the better service?" the person handling the call gives all the information available from the source and suggests that the inquirer follow up by telephone call or visit to the resource itself. In some cases where licensing is involved, they are referred to provincial or city licensing departments.

Motivation of Inquirer

(4) Although it is not always possible, an attempt is made, by good telephone technique, to discover why the inquirer needs the information he asks. This is important for two reasons (1) possibly the request is not as simple as it appears and the inquirer may be asking for help on a larger issue, e. g. day care for children or placement of

old persons (2) the Community Information Service reserves the use of its files to serving the health, welfare and recreational needs of citizens, or aiding organizations interested in giving or promoting legitimate health and welfare services. It cannot become involved in commercial issues or unrecognized fund raising, or give information to persons who may not use it to the common good.

Question Presented and Actual Problem

(5) When, as in (4), a general information call indicates more deeply rooted problems and the inquirer seems willing to explore the situation further, he is either transferred to the social worker, asked to leave his number, or an appointment is made for him.

Questions Regarding Parent Agency

(6) Information regarding the policy of the Community Chest and Council is given only at the request of the Executive Director, and all complaints regarding agency service are referred to him or the Assistant Executive Director, after it has been suggested to the person calling that he should first discuss his complaint with the proper official at the agency concerned.

Specialized Information Sources

Since there are many other agencies with special authority or facilities for answering specialized inquiries, the Community Information Service endeavours to refer questions in specialized

areas to these organizations. Thus, questions regarding volunteer service go to the Volunteer Bureau, while all questions of a reference nature are directed to the Vancouver Public Library. In a similar way, questions regarding professional social work issues, standards, community planning, and social action on current issues are brought to the attention of the appropriate community organization worker in the Community Chest and Council.

The services of professional and labour groups are utilized for such questions as "How do I qualify as an electrician in British Columbia?" "Where can I locate a German speaking obstetrician?" "Can you recommend a psychiatrist?" "Is an Idaho divorce legal in British Columbia?"

Gaps in Resource Files

Acknowledged gaps in welfare services, as well as the inability of the office to meet the needs of inquirers, are admitted frankly to clients. In the second area, the receptionist - volunteer may take a telephone number and agree to recall if she is able to find resources to match the inquirer's need. A good part of the resource file of the Community Information Service has developed from "hind sight" gained from seeking answers to such questions as "Where can I place my three week old baby while we move into a new house?" "Is there a Negro group which would provide a visitor for a lonely American seaman in hospital?" "How can I get impartial advice in purchasing a hearing aid?"

Goals in Giving General Information

In answering general information the most important

factors in procedure are:

(1) To give accurate information which will enable the inquirer to reach the needed resource quickly.

(2) To listen with courtesy to the whole story the client wishes to tell the office worker, being particularly careful not to interrupt with inappropriate suggestions which may have already been explored and rejected by the inquirer.

(3) To accept and respond to the fact that "to inquire" is actually to put oneself in a dependency situation, something not easy for most normal people. This situation is minimized by a quiet, assured, unhurried and thoughtful reply.

Inquiries regarding Individual Problems

The second type of inquiry coming to the Community Information Service includes the individuals who indicate by the nature of their request and/or the problem they actually present, that they need more than factual information or brief direction.

For these persons "The services of the Community Information Service are directed towards determining the nature of their problem and, if necessary, making a referral to the appropriate agency or service, giving the client, whenever possible, a choice of services."¹

Actually, there is very little choice of services, except possibly in cases of emergency financial assistance, and then, if the client has a pattern of seeking such assistance, he is often limited by his previous use of these services.

The Community Information Service workers try at the point of inquiry to interpret to the inquirer that the Information Service does not do continuing case work. It is usually explained to inquirer that any identifying information requested is only

¹ Community Chest and Council, Vancouver, Minutes, Advisory Committee to the Community Information Service, March 10, 1954.

recorded in order to ascertain where best he may turn for help in the particular situation he presents. Sometimes this interpretation is extremely difficult and the inquirer, having tested his courage in presenting his problem, is reluctant to accept^o the fact that the services he needs are not available here and now. Yet, where the function of the Community Information Service has not been explained, or where the client assumes the worker will, as he often puts it "see him through" referral is doubly difficult.

Financial Assistance in Emergencies

By policy and in general practice the Community Information Service does not give financial assistance, nor will it meet the request of agencies to give a token sum until an interview is possible. However, the Committee has made available a small petty cash fund. To date, monthly expenditures have never reached the \$10.00 limit. There are, however, occasions when an inquirer may be given cash for a meal or a bed because referral is seriously delayed, a week-end intervenes, or as in one case, weather conditions did not permit a mother with a baby making an trip to a rural agency, before returning home. The advisory committee has agreed that bus tickets may be given to elderly, ill, or handicapped persons or to mothers with children when the referral agency is at a distance. Approximately \$3.00 a month is used on these tickets.

Eligibility: Agency Responsibility

At no point does the Community Information Service act as a central intake office as was feared. "The actual determination of eligibility for assistance or suitability as a recipient

of agency services remains the prerogative of the individual agency."¹ The client is told that a certain agency or department will explore his problem if he wishes to go to their headquarters, or to have the C. I. S. worker make a specific appointment for him.

Calls on Behalf of Others

Frequently calls are received on behalf of other persons. The person contacting the Community Information Service is asked to give his name and telephone number and tell his relationship to the one on whose behalf he has called. If possible, contact is made by telephone with the person concerned. In all cases the original inquirer is asked if the object of his inquiry is aware that this call is being made.

Use of Social Service Index

"The resources of the Social Service Index are used in all cases where referral to specific health, welfare or allied professional service is indicated and/or where the use of the Index may facilitate professional consideration of the request."² Despite the fact that the use of the Index has been reduced and that the local public assistance body has withdrawn from Index membership - a poor referral usually results when the C.I.S. neglects to use the S.S.I. In some cases the client is informed

1 Community Chest and Council of Vancouver, Minutes, Advisory Committee, Community Information Service, March 10, 1954.

2 Ibid.

that this step is being taken. When this can be done it is usually related to the information in the face sheet regarding the use of local agency services. Occasionally it is not deemed wise to report to the client that a check has been made at the Social Service Index. After an inquiry has been made at the S.S.I. all agencies active in the preceding three years in the area of problem now presented by the client are called before the client is directed to another service. If after this consultation the services of yet another agency are indicated, workers in the "new" agency are informed what other agencies are, or have been recently, active in this case.

Known Clients of Agencies

When, in an interview a client states or admits that he is already receiving services from an agency it is usually suggested, if that agency gives case work services, that he discuss his problem with his own worker. If he does not wish to do so the worker may explain that he getting the best and only service available, or that, in the case of certain services such as emergency food, clothing or shelter that she would like to discuss his situation with his worker. The transiency and scarcity of workers in public agencies makes this problem particularly difficult with some social assistance cases, and old people on pension or assistance. With ex-prisoners and former patients of mental hospitals and clinics, the inquirer is often reluctant to contact the only agency equipped to meet his problem. Usually the client can be led to see that such consultation is to his benefit. The agency

workers have generally been most understanding of clients who have gone elsewhere for help. If the client does not wish the agency to be called his request is respected. However, it is then virtually impossible to find him service except in a few limited areas.

Preparation for Referral

Before directing a client to an agency on a referral basis, the Community Information Service worker discusses with him the general problem he presents, tries to discover what he has done already to meet this situation, and seeks to help him understand what kind of service he may receive from a certain agency, if accepted by them as a client. When he has heard of the services available at this agency, the Community Information Service worker tries to determine whether he really wants to explore the resources. If he seems to think he could benefit from the services, he is helped to decide whether he will make his own contact or if he wishes an appointment made for him by the Community Information Service.

A telephone call is made to an agency before any client is referred to that agency and always before he leaves the C. I. S. office.

Occasionally when the client is fearful or hostile this call is made in his presence; more frequently he is asked to wait in the reception office while the agency is telephoned.

Reporting from Agencies to Information Service

An effort has been made to interpret to all agencies the value of reporting back to the C.I.S. on each referral. The results

in Vancouver, as in other centres, have not been encouraging. The Family agency and one veteran's service, however, being most cooperative in this regard. Since the Community Information Service has no reason to record the active treatment or services these calls are limited to such statements as "accepted for service", "Not a suitable referral", "Proved unwilling to accept agency resources", "Did not appear for appointment". Ideally, the Community Information Service would, if no report is received, check on each definite referral. Limited staff has not permitted this.

Gaps in Services Available in Specific Areas

As in the case of general information calls there are many problems presented for which there are not at present social work or health resources available. The Community Information Service worker in such situations acknowledges these gaps in services to the client and occasionally seeks to help him plan how he may himself minimize his problem by the use of his own personal resource, or non-social work resources, such as churches, private professional services, newspapers, business concerns.

Repeated Calls to Information Office

On the whole, few clients return to the Community Information Service and these few are for the most part elderly persons or single men who do not have social workers readily available to listen to their troubles. The repeaters, though few, are frequent and the relationships must sometimes be terminated by a re-iteration of the function of the project. It is a reflection on

the structure of our metropolitan society as well as an indication of the client's social inadequacy that persons should want to return to an office which has nothing to offer in direct services or group activity. Perhaps also it is a reflection on the calibre of professional services rendered there.

Inquirers with a Pattern of Inadequacy

The Community Information Service has of course no solution to offer for the "hard core" of families and single individuals who move from one unsolveable situation to another, using agency services briefly and ineffectively, unable ever to take hold of a productive relationship. Many of these people have come to the C. I. S. as another place to "shop" and inability to help them, particularly in view of the Chest relationship, often creates negative and sometimes hostile reactions.

Focus in Situations Indicating Need for Referral

In dealing with individual problems or situations in which referrals are indicated, the focus of the interview or the telephone call is three-fold:

- (1) to gain a useful understanding of the inquirer's situation

- (2) to assist him in understanding and wishing to take positive steps in dealing with the situation.

- (3) to consider with him all possible measures, those of his own suggestion and those which he might not have known.

- (4) on the basis of the above, to effect a constructive referral by which the client is enabled to move comfortably and with some confidence towards a solution of his problem.

Importance of Skilled Work in the Brief Interview

The fact that we do not have a second chance makes the use of time have a different connotation. This sense of time urgency, while natural, can be in itself defeating. One is inclined to feel that an "air tight" case must be presented to the seemingly appropriate community agency. Only in a relaxed atmosphere is the client best served. A referral should not be a demand or an appeal but an opportunity for two mutually respected professional people to talk over a situation, make use of each others understanding and knowledge and work out a plan of referral suited to one individual client.

Qualifications of Workers

It is therefore apparent that for this area of the work of an information centre one requires experienced staff, who, because they are long familiar with travelling the long road with clients, can safely take the short cuts. Any shortcomings in the direct referral program of the Vancouver Community Information "Centre may be attributed to the lack of a worker with a background of supervisory experience in several kinds of agencies giving social case work services.

RESOURCE FILES

The Community Information Service in Vancouver opened its doors on June 9th, 1953, with three shiny and empty file cabinets. Any resource file ever maintained in the Welfare Council had been "lost" in the process of many movings. The only directory of welfare services was a very generalized and already

out-dated "Manual of Resources" published in 1952 for the use of junior high school teachers. The staff member, through reading and after consultation with the director of similar services in Seattle, had been made aware of the dangers of any over-dependency on mechanical card indices. At the same time, there was evidence that in the agencies in Vancouver the trend towards a more psychologically oriented type of social work had led workers to lose some interest in the client who presented a direct question, requiring a direct and accurate answer. It appeared that agency resource files, once a familiar part of agency equipment, were not well maintained except in one or two cases. Hence so many calls to the Community Chest and Council prior to the establishment of the Community Information Centre. The Community Information Service has tried in the short period of operation to steer a course between relying on mechanical listings and giving understanding but inaccurate direction.

RESOURCE FILES DEVELOPED ON BASIS OF INQUIRIES

Quite frankly, as has been stated before, once having developed a simple method of filing, the process of developing resource files was done largely from "hind-sight". The nature of the inquiries coming to the Community Information Service in the first few months indicated the type of information required and pointed up areas about which one might anticipate questions.

Following suggestions received from other centres, the Community Information Service hopes eventually to develop three

types of master files.

(1) an organizational file, with services listed under auspices,

(2) an alphabetical file where auspices, subject and names of personnel are listed A to Z,

(3) a subject file, where, under the title of problems or type of needed services, agency and organization resources giving these services or meeting these problems are listed.

To date the first two files have been set up. The major routine task of the Community Information Service in the Fall of 1954 is to establish the third and "subject" file. This is a professional assignment but will provide a year-long volunteer assignment in checking present files, transferring information, and cross referencing.

ORGANIZATION FILE

The organizational or "auspices" file is and will continue to be the most comprehensive file resource. It was divided originally into five sections:

1. Resources of the Community Information Service Operation.
2. Resources of the Community Chest and Council of Vancouver.
3. Resources of the City of Vancouver.
4. Resources of the Province of British Columbia.
5. Resources of Canada.

Under these headings, file folders are placed alphabetically. In some cases similar resources are grouped in one filing folder and there either listed on single sheets or in some cases

in folders devoting one page to each of the individual organizations, falling under such headings as Service clubs, Camps, Pre-school centres. All formally organized agencies and departments, however, have an individual folder. The contents of each folder vary depending on the amount of written material available in the Community Chest and Council; the direct contacts made by Community Information Service with the organization, the degree to which the organization forwards material to the Community Information Service. The amount of material also depends on the frequency and nature of its use. A single-purpose agency has a less extensive resource file than a multi-function agency. The Community Information Service seeks to record in each file folder such specific information as the nature of the service, specific characteristics of eligibility such as age, residence, geographic coverage, financial arrangements and the method of referral preferred by the agency.

Some of the resource files which are important to Community Information Service operation and more complex than those listed above are the Resource Manual of the Department of Welfare, Province of British Columbia, and local, national and American agency directories, including the Womens' Directory of Vancouver Service groups.

NEED FOR CONSTANT REVIEW OF AGENCY FILES

The files have been reviewed twice during the twelve months operation. This is not adequate. Were there sufficient staff time it should be possible to develop abstracts for each file folder and eliminate the bulky assortment of material now collected

which may include annual reports, brochures, staff lists, press clippings, summaries of interviews with agency staff members, and policy statements. Until there is a professional worker with enough time available to give constant and consistent supervision to the maintenance of up-to-date, pertinent information, recourse to the files is not as speedy and accurate as could be desired.

ALPHABETICAL FILE

One of the first mechanical tools which the Advisory Committee planned to acquire was a large rotary file, similar to those used in the Community Chest and Council. The cost of this equipment being prohibitive, a small but effective substitute was found, in two miniature rotary card reels holding a total of 2000 cards. These cards, too small for convenient typing, are printed by the volunteer staff and show the names of contact and organization, addresses, telephone numbers and in some cases indicate areas of service. There is considerable cross reference. In a few cases, they also include "subject" cards, e.g. "Sight-saving Classes" -- "Hearing Aids" -- "Marriage Counselling". Often such "subject" cards direct the telephonist to a particular folder in the organizational file.

MAPS

For quick reference in both the reception room and the interviewing office there are street maps of Greater Vancouver, transportation guides, a map of the Province of British Columbia, and specialized maps showing social areas, schools, parks, public

welfare and public health centres and boundaries.

LIBRARY

The library of the Community Chest and Council is situated in a room adjacent to the Community Information Service. The professional staff of the Community Chest and Council is at present engaged in reorganizing the library. Under a new and very simple system, necessary until a staff librarian is acquired, material requested of the Community Information Service, such as legislative documents, annual and conference reports, reports of Community Chest and Council committees will be speedily available.

IMPORTANCE OF WELL DOCUMENTED RESOURCE FILES

The validity of resource files can be tested only when we know the outcome of their application -- a difficult matter in a project such as the Community Information Service. Resource files are not merely "tools". They may, if used properly, be as much a part of the total process of brief services as were those earlier components of social work practice, the case record, agency policy statements, or financial assistance.

The development of resource files through direct contact at the source, with organizations, is one method by which an information service may demonstrate to these agencies that its primary function is not direct service; that it can, if provided with accurate information, be a means of aiding the agencies in each achieving their particular goal of community service.

It has been the aim of the Community Information Service

in its first year to develop a resource file which is:

- (1) easily familiar to and usable by all members of staff, professional, clerical and volunteer.
- (2) as simple as possible
- (3) accurate and quickly accessible
- (4) well cross-referenced
- (5) including only material useful in achieving the fulfilment of the aims of the Community Information Service
- (6) related to frequency of use
- (7) useful to both the general public and to professional social workers.

The finest case work skills are of no avail if clients are "reassured" that they will find help in an agency no longer active in this area or one for which, because of residence, religion or other factor, they are no longer eligible.

The process of securing and utilizing resource material is one which demands professional skill, knowledge and experience. In itself a resource file may be only a tool. Used dynamically, "it is a channel for mutual sharing of agency program information, for the sharpening of information and referral skills and for administrative planning."¹

VOLUNTEERS

The aim of the Community Information Service in regard to each person bringing an inquiry to its attention sounds simple but is difficult in attainment. When the inquirer hangs up his

¹ Rummel, Kathryn C., "The Resource File", Information and Referral, A Report of Two Conferences, p. 32, Welfare and Health Council, New York, 1952.

telephone or leaves the office he should be assured (1) that his real problem was understood; (2) that he has obtained accurate information regarding community services open to him; (3) that he has been helped to make his own decision regarding the next step towards finding an answer to his inquiry, a solution to his problem.

In order to achieve this condition, ideally, every inquirer should be handled, from his first introduction, by professional social workers.

STUDY COMMITTEE EMPHASIS ON PROFESSIONAL SERVICES IN PROJECTED CENTRE

The committee planning the Vancouver Information Service were well aware of the professional demands of every aspect of the new project. Their plan to employ two social workers would have enabled them to limit the services of the secretary-clerical worker to the complex and demanding task of filing, recording, and correspondence. It was probably this committee acceptance of the skills required for every part of the operation which led the group to minimize, in their discussions with the Junior League, the possibilities of utilizing League members as volunteers in the Community Information Service.

STAFF LIMITED BY OPERATING BUDGET

However, the first budget limited staff to one social worker. Since a single worker cannot possibly be personally involved with every inquiry it soon became apparent that the clerical

worker must carry the majority of initial telephone calls and first contacts with persons coming to the office. At the same time she was responsible for a heavy clerical assignment in correspondence, filing, recording and administrative detail related to the advisory committee. With 927 calls in the first three months of operation, a natural priority on services to inquirers resulted in an alarming delay in recording, reporting and filing.

DECISION TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE

The question of using volunteers in the office was raised at the first meeting after the opening of the service. Respecting the earlier opinion of the committee, the secretary was of the opinion that the staff were not yet in a position to give volunteers the required supervision. A request was made to the Junior League to assist the Community Information Service through the services of two home volunteers who would work on the "service clubs" section of the resource file. In October it was decided to request the Junior League for four volunteers to work in the office one afternoon or morning each week. A letter was forwarded to the placement offices of the Junior League enclosing a job description for the two types of volunteer workers required, the telephone-receptionist and the auxiliary interviewer.

As a result of this request during the period October, 1953 to May 31, 1954, seven Junior League members joined the volunteer staff of the Community Information Service; two home-based, four as receptionist volunteers, and one (an ex-social worker) as an interviewer. These Junior League volunteers were all home-

makers who were professionally employed before their marriages. Three of them were formerly in social work practice, one of these three having worked in the intake department in a public welfare department. Three of these volunteers left after four months and two months duty because of family responsibilities and were replaced. The two home-based workers did not receive enough supervision and requested other placements. Another receptionist telephonist took permanent employment in her own profession. The remaining three have worked in the Community Information Service for eleven months and wish to continue their placements.

ORIENTATION OF VOLUNTEERS

Each volunteer is interviewed before placement and the job description reviewed in detail. It had been hoped that some method of regular supervision could be worked out. On the whole the volunteers and worker have both been so occupied during the three-hour weekly period that this has not been achieved on a regular basis. Actually there is a continuous process of consultation around most interviews and whenever it is apparent that the volunteer wishes to discuss her role in the Community Information Service time has been found for an appointment.

VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS

The degree to which these volunteers have enabled the employed staff to maintain recording up-to-date has been one very positive effect of their service. They have all worked in the mechanics of the resource files, each assuming at some point,

major responsibility for certain parts of these files. All public relation material has been sent out through their efforts. In working on these humdrum tasks they have often introduced new ideas which promote the efficiency of office procedure.

CONTRIBUTION TO MORALE: JUNIOR LEAGUE VOLUNTEERS

Most important of all they have added to the "atmosphere" of the Community Information Service office. While this may sound sentimental it has bearing on the type of service rendered by the Community Information Service. Because of often rich home or educational background and their acceptance of the basic philosophy of volunteer service inherent in the organization of the Junior League they are skilled in developing good contacts with the public and show a warmth, interest, and patience in their relationships with inquirers. They are careful and courteous in their use of the telephone. None of them have ever "assumed" they knew the answers. None of them have been outwardly disturbed by the negative attitudes and sometimes bizarre behaviour of the people who come to the Community Information Service office. To date there has not been a single indication that they have failed to respect the confidential nature of their assignment.

While the office has failed to develop a regular pattern of supervision, the experiment of using Junior League volunteers may otherwise be termed a successful and happy one both from the viewpoint of the Community Information Service and the Junior League whose placement officer reported in May, 1954 that all volunteers were enthusiastic and wished to continue their service in the fall of 1954.

OTHER VOLUNTEERS

Two other volunteers have worked in the Community Information Service since the opening. One is a young woman who because of home responsibilities acts as "emergency" volunteer. She is particularly valuable in the office because of previous Community Chest and Council contacts. The other volunteer served in a like capacity in the Rehabilitation Centre. She is an older person with outstanding secretarial skills. She is particularly effective as a receptionist, and has, because of long residence in the city, remarkably wide contacts with many community groups. In the whole staff this one volunteer has become the "answer" man because of her continued work in the development of the resource files.

EVALUATION OF USE OF VOLUNTEERS

While the committee planning the Community Information Service did not anticipate the advantages of utilizing volunteers, the necessity may be regarded instead as an opportunity. Quite apart from actual humdrum services often rendered, the volunteer staff of the Community Information Service has done much to develop better public relations, to open new channels of communication and above all to prevent a small office with two employed staff members from becoming isolated and static in its methodology. Volunteers are not super cargo, but needed, welcomed, and one hopes self-accepted members of the staff of Community Information Service. The low rate of absenteeism and tardiness on the part of the volunteers seems to indicate that this acceptance is valid. Reports

from the Junior League Placement Offices indicate that the Board of the Junior League recognize the Community Information Service Office as a preferred placement.

PUBLICITY

"The ultimate foundation of good publicity must be good work; a bureau doing good work ultimately and slowly becomes known, but without publicity probably not as widely as it should be."¹

The public relations program of the Community Information Service has not been well developed. A summary of the types of publicity utilized by American Information Services indicates that extensive use has been made of the following media; newspapers, radio, flyers, news board, television, professional and trade journals, pamphlets, posters, calendars, blotters, listings on Chest Pledge cards, and special telephone listings.

To date in one year, the Vancouver Community Information Service through a small sub-committee on publicity has brought the fact of its existence to the public in the following ways.

- (1) Letters to all doctors, lawyers and ministers.
- (2) Large and attractive posters for placement in staff rooms in business and industry during 1953 Chest Campaign.
- (3) Limited coverage in a few trade journals, one ethnic group paper, and two service club journals.
- (4) One mention by a columnist in a local paper.
- (5) An excellent article on the Transportation Company's bus bulletin "The Buzzer."
- (6) Two press statements and one picture.
- (7) A descriptive brochure forwarded to a selected mailing list of 4000 individuals and organizations.

¹ National Council of Social Services, "Advising the Citizen", p. 100, par. 4, London, England, 1950.

(8) An article in each of the 27 weekly neighbourhood papers in Greater Vancouver.

(9) A billboard at the Forum, Exhibition Park.

Most of this publicity with the exception of the brochures was utilized in the first six months of the project's history.

The Information Service has found, as is reported in the United States, that each "wave" of publicity has brought an increased number of inquirers to the office. While it might be anticipated that agencies would object to extensive Community Information Service publicity, apparently to date even the "waves" of increased inquiries have not stimulated a demand for services beyond the agency's ability to supply them.

PROBLEMS OF PRIORITY IN PUBLICITY PLANS: COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL

Because the Community Information Service is a part of the Community Chest and Council the problem of obtaining publicity is a difficult one. The papers and radio stations give excellent coverage during the annual financial campaign. It is extremely difficult to ask them to extend this courtesy on a twelve months basis for another Community Chest and Council project. Consultation with the public relations authorities in the Community Chest and Council has led the publicity committee to admit that to some degree the Community Information Service is not considered a particularly newsworthy project.

SERVICE IS NOT PARTICULARLY NEWSWORTHY

In a modern community citizens accustomed to call so many sources of information regarding transportation, weather,

sports results, and other topics find nothing unique in the fact that there is an office giving similar direction to health and welfare services. An information centre is a channel; the human interest stories emanating from it are seldom concluded decisively. The Community Information Service may be able to help an unemployed waiter achieve self-dependency by directing him to an agency where he may obtain a white coat - but it is the agency who gives the coat, and possibly other non-material support with it that is in a "newsworthy" position.

VALUE OF AVAILABLE PUBLICITY.

Moreover as has been stated before, a modern Council in social welfare is engaged in so many endeavours meriting public interpretation that priorities must be established. On the other hand, if the Community Information Service is to fulfil its purpose it must be known to the general public. The media used to date have been, in each case, effective in this regard and many persons have stated they came to the office because of this -- a newspaper clipping or a copy of the Buzzer which they show the worker. Churches, business organizations and agencies have asked for many additional copies of the brochure. One unsolicited article in a German language paper brought over twenty letters to the Community Information Service, revealing the need of new citizens for varied types of health and welfare and educational information.

PUBLICITY -- A PROBLEM FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The problem of publicity has been discussed at almost every meeting of the advisory committee. It is now generally accepted that unless new and inexpensive means of publicity can be devised that the Community Information Service as a part of the Community Chest and Council must accept a relatively low priority on publicity, through the generally accepted media, daily press and radio. It was recommended at one Advisory Committee meeting that the sub-committee on publicity work out with the Public Relations department of the Community Chest and Council a sound and reasonable twelve month public relations program. After the completion of one year's operation this plan will be easier to achieve since the Community Information Service now has some basis for estimating the effectiveness and timeliness of different forms of public interpretation.

SERVICES, BEST PUBLICITY

The quality of services rendered remains the greatest interpretive factor. Many inquirers state that they heard from a friend that he received helpful direction on referral at the Community Information Service office.

RESULTS OF A MINIMUM PUBLICITY PROGRAM

"One whole phase of the work of a Bureau (Information Service) is in fact, public relations. A primary activity is to interpret to the citizens the activities of government and voluntary organizations. The publicizing of this work is the final thread in a long chain which links the individual citizen to the social administrative organization of the

country, with its complex pattern of statutory, voluntary and mixed activities. If the end link in this chain, the link between the bureau and the citizen breaks down, then a great deal of the value of the administrative work which has gone before, in this rich, complex organization, is lost." ¹

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The development of the advisory committee from a study group to a standing committee of the Social Planning Committee, Community Chest and Council has been described in Chapter II of this study. In June 1953, when the Centre opened, the advisory committee consisted of fourteen persons, of whom thirteen had been active prior to the opening of the Centre.

Since then two additional members have been added to the Committee, one a former school teacher and prominent organizational leader, the other the Chairman of the local co-ordinating committee concerned with the welfare of new Canadians. One charter member representing informally the School of Social Work, University of British Columbia, resigned, but it is hoped will be replaced by the appointment of another faculty member.

The strength of the Committee has therefore been sixteen. At the eleven meetings held between June 1st, 1953 and May 31st, 1954, the average attendance has been eleven. In addition two staff members of the Community Chest and Council have usually attended these meetings making the total attendance including the Community Information Service secretary usually thirteen or fourteen.

¹ National Council of Social Services, Advising the Citizen, p. 100, par. 3, London, England, 1950.

COMMUNITY INTEREST REPRESENTED IN COMMITTEE

In items of interest and community activity the committee members represent informally the following groups (gainfully employed professional workers, marked X).

(1) Homemaker, particularly interested in money raising and administrative practices in welfare agencies.

(2) Homemaker, ex social worker, active in Community Chest and Council activities, over a period of years in Division, Social Planning Committee, Board of Directors.

(3) Homemaker, Chairman Co-ordinating Committee on Citizenship.

(4) Homemaker, active in church, women's service work, and youth leadership.

X (5) Executive Director Child Protection Agency.

X (6) Executive Director, Alcohol Research Committee, and church.

X (7) Executive Director Metropolitan Youth Organization.

X (8) Acting Executive Director Family Agency.

X (9) Supervisor of Welfare Services, Public Welfare Agency.

X (10) Director, Nursing Services, Public Health Agency.

X (11) Business man, Service Club officer.

(12) Homemaker, ex-social worker, Junior League member, Agency Board member.

(13) Homemaker, former presswoman, Junior League member.

(14) Homemaker, former President Community Chest and Council, now also active in Mental Health Co-ordinating Agency.

X (15) Supervisor Social Services, Veterans' Affairs.

(16) Business man, active in town planning, housing, Agency Board Member.

In looking ahead to the rounding out of the Advisory Committee it might be considered to have achieved the "broad representation" visualized by the planning committee if additional members were recruited from the following areas; (1) the clergy, (2) organized labour, (3) The School of Social Work (re-selection), (4) the agencies giving emergency financial assistance, and (5) the professional group of personnel workers.

As it stands, however, it appears to be a fairly strong and representative group. As the early listing of the project shows, the members are all persons recognized as community leaders, each contributing constructively to the total endeavours of the group. The proportion of laymen to employed staff remains in a seemingly appropriate ratio.

CONTENT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

A hasty review of the concerns of the committee during the first year of the Centre's operation indicates that the following topics were given consideration at the eleven Advisory Committee Meetings in order of frequency of discussion. The Public Relations program of the Community Information Service was discussed at nine advisory committee meetings, the use of volunteers at eight, and the matter of financial support at seven. Other matters on the agenda given consideration at more than one committee meeting were:

- (1) Recruitment of committee members.
- (2) Unemployed employable persons - temporary assistance.
- (3) Interpretation of the Community Information Service to specific community groups.

(4) Development of Community Information Service Policy.

(5) Consideration of requests from Community Chest and Council for Community Information Service to undertake projects additional to their function.

(6) Camp Referral project (carried by Community Information Service in 1953).

(7) Development of furnishings and office equipment.

(8) Encouraging reports from agencies on referrals.

(9) Camp Information - co-operation with British Columbia Camping Association.

(10) Resource Lists.

(11) Appointment to other committees, Community Chest and Council.

Business considered at one meeting only included: complaints regarding project, value of knowing source of referral, Community Chest and Council, Constitution, responsibilities in regard to giving Service Club Information, service of interpreters, handling of requests for domestic services without salary, resources for marital counselling, petty cash, car tickets.

Four factors are noteworthy in discussing the development of the Advisory Committee during the first twelve months operation of the Centre. °

Concern of Committee Regarding Publicity

(1) The subject most discussed was publicity. Throughout the year there has been pressure coming from the Advisory Committee on the Public Relations Department, Community Chest and Council regarding obtaining a wider programme of interpretation. It is difficult for the committee and the employed secretary to

accept the limitations of working out publicity plans with the Public Relations Department within the structure of the total Public Relations plan of the Community Chest and Council.

Limitation of Program to Original Purpose and Function

(2) There has appeared to be some pressure from the Community Chest and Council towards using the Community Information Service as a "dumping ground" for (a) several kinds of Central co-ordinating services, and (b) physically, as a sub-office for campaign. The committee, guarding the experimental element of the project has resisted this pressure at each point. This has not tended to develop consistently good relationships between the Advisory Committee and Community Chest and Council officials.

"Barometer" Function of Committee

(3) The Community Information Service has, as one of its special aims "to accumulate data which will show where needed services are lacking or inadequate." As a sub-committee of the Social Planning Committee the Community Information Service Committee is privileged to report, on the basis of its operation such gaps in services, to the regular meetings of the Social Planning Committee. To date, only one problem has been presented. Between June 9 and September 26, twenty-eight persons, or an average of nine persons a month requesting emergency assistance in food, shelter, or clothing, were unemployed employables or their dependants. In October the number had increased to twenty-seven, and in November to forty-nine. At this point, the Community Information Service referred to the Social Planning Committee for

direction regarding the problem of financial assistance for unemployed employable persons. The Social Planning Committee, in turn referred the problem to the Board of Directors, which set up a special committee with wide and strong community representation. It is hoped that, while some helpful measures to meet the situation were instigated on a temporary basis in 1953, that the committee and the other bodies subsequently interested in the situation may have gained governmental support at the appropriate level for basic reforms in this area before the winter of 1954.

Although the Community Information Service has cited to the Social Planning Committee examples of other gaps in welfare services, it has not been able to substantiate qualitatively the very apparent needs for extended nursery school mental health and case work services. A careful evaluation of individual requests and good process on committee level, is required before thoughtful, well based recommendations for study can be made to the Social Planning Committee.

Summary of Committee Development

In summary, the Advisory Committee to the Community Information Service is well constituted, and has held regular meetings with a fairly good attendance. It is relatively well focussed on its purpose, and its meetings have included important content. It has held the interest of the members who originally planned the centre and has recruited new members. Some further recruitment of members from unrepresented and key areas is suggested. The subject most discussed was publicity, followed

closely by "volunteer services" and financing. Little or no progress has been made in the development of written terms of references or statements of policy. The Committee has not utilized as much as could be desired its prerogative to present unmet needs and problems to the Social Planning Committee although the results in regard to the one problem so presented, the plight of unemployed employable persons, received attention and action.

As was stated in Chapter two, this Committee for three years fought for the inauguration of the Community Information Service. Now this office is in operation with employed staff and volunteers carrying its day by day duties. It is apparent that measures to maintain the active participation of the committee must be taken or it will become merely a receptacle for professional reports, a fate its members ill deserve.

This situation has been minimized by the necessity during 1954 of holding firm against evident pressure from the Community Chest and Council to widen the function of the Community Information Service to include Chest and Council operations not basically related to the purpose of the Centre. One can only hope this pressure or some other continues to demand the watchful consideration of the committee until new areas of committee interest and action may be explored.

The Advisory Committee has many functions which can be profitably developed; determination of policies, development of good public relations program, recruitment of volunteers and committee members, strengthening of relationships with Community

Chest and Council and community groups, support of good professional practice, extension of staff and facilities with increased intake.

Perhaps, however, the leaders of the British Advice Bureau have pointed up its most pertinent function in the following statement:

If the Citizens' Advice Bureau is to remain a permanent and developing feature of our social life, it must be regarded as an entity of its own and protected as such. Transitoriness and change are as inevitable in this field of work as in all human endeavour. The workers and inquirers of today vary from those of tomorrow. The Bureau belongs not only to them but also to the citizens of the future who should inherit it as a special centre where common resources can be mobilized to meet common need. One function of a local committee is to provide a permanent and continuous form of action. To fulfil its functions individual committee members must have its cause at heart and be so involved that they will want to give to the Centre time, thought, and effort.¹

RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL

As has been indicated earlier in this chapter, the Advisory Committee of the Community Information Service, Vancouver, has on several occasions sought to clarify, in certain specific situations, its function and its responsibilities within the total framework of the Community Chest and Council, its parent administrative body.

The Advisory Committee, consisting largely of individuals who were members of the original study committee, made possible the inauguration of the Community Information Service. They

¹ National Council of Social Services, Advising the Citizen, page 72, p.2, London, England, 1950.

defined its general purpose and function, interpreted its potentiality at all levels of the Community Chest and Council, took responsibility for finding financial sponsorship for it outside the Community Chest and Council. They have a natural proprietary interest in it that cannot now be recognized in its administrative setting. In that administrative setting the Community Information Service is one facet of the central services of the Community Chest and Council. The Committee has an advisory function in relation to the Social Planning Executive, but cannot make policy.

The workers both professional and clerical are employees of the Community Chest and Council and as such are responsible to the Executive Director Community Chest and Council, or to another staff member designated by him. These workers may be dismissed or replaced, their salaries raised or lowered, their sick leave and holidays regulated without reference to the Advisory Committee. Additional duties may, according to constitution, be assigned to them without reference to the Advisory Committee.

This is actually good administrative practice, made difficult by the historical background of this particular committee. The difficulties to date have arisen when the Advisory Committee has questioned quite logically whether assignments made administratively by the Community Chest and Council jeopardize the development of the Community Information Service according to its agreed purpose or function or where such assignments, while not onerous, might confuse any evaluation of the project made at the conclusion of its operation as an experimental service. In

this regard the committee advised the Social Planning Committee that it did not wish to accept responsibility for the Camp Referral project, 1954. It has asked through the Executive Director that its secretary be relieved of certain committee responsibilities and has suggested that Community Information Service premises should not be utilized as sub-campaign offices, where money would be handled in front of persons seeking and denied, by policy, emergency assistance.

On the other hand some Committee members have questioned the wisdom of the Administration Community Chest and Council, granting to the Community Information Service worker the usual annual increments made according to Community Chest and Council personnel policy. This query, it is believed, was not made with any implied reflection on the staff but was based on a recognition of a responsibility to the outside groups financing the project. The fact that the Community Information Service paid rent for its premises and was billed for stationery, publicity material and office supplies, usually accepted as part of administrative expenses, made this situation even more difficult.

NEED FOR WRITTEN TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee and the administrative officers of the Community Chest and Council are beginning to acknowledge that these differences are not basic and that a clear written statement of the terms of reference of the Community Information Service could be used to profit. Such terms of reference are to be worked out in the fall of 1954, and are to include reference to:

I (1) The method of recruiting members of the Community Information Advisory Committee.

(2) The terms of office of the members.

(3) The function of the Committee in relationship to the Community Chest and Council.

(4) The relationship of the staff of the Community Information Service to

- (a) The Advisory Committee
- (b) The Administrative Staff structure Community Chest and Council.
- (c) To other divisions and groupings, Community Chest and Council.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION PERSONNEL IN COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL STRUCTURE

Within the Community Chest and Council, the professional staff member is supervised on a regular basis by the Assistant Director, Community Chest and Council. This supervision is not particularly related to professional practice but is administratively focussed. The Chairman and secretary of the Community Information Service sit on the Social Planning Committee (now Executive Committee of the Welfare Section). They are not included on the sub-executive where all divisions and important standing committees are represented.

LACK OF COMMUNICATION

The most important difficulty for the Secretary, Community Information Service, is the lack of direct communication with the various groups of Community Chest and Council. While the highlights of the activities of the groups are usually reported to staff or circulated in written reports, the secretary, to fulfil her role must be particularly aware of the current

developments in community organization. Divisional meetings where total services in certain areas are discussed can provide her with more information in less time than five or six telephone calls or visits to executive directors of agencies. On several occasions when certain gaps in services have been presented by the Community Information Service worker to staff or to committee it has been discovered, that certain action, unknown to the Community Information Service worker is already under way to meet these needs. Such information is invaluable to Community Information Service operation. While it is certainly undesirable for the secretary of the Community Information Service to be absent from her office more than necessary, involvement in Division meetings might aid in the general interpretation of the Community Information Service as a community service. This lack of communication may be as much due to the professional limitations of the secretary, Community Information Service, as to the policies of Community Chest and Council. Despite this, one would covet for the secretary the situation enjoyed by an American social worker in a similar position, who reports:

One of the elements of the special environment in which a central referral service operates is a unique exposure to, and involvement with, community planning. In the past year this office has been invited to participate in Committees on Problems of the Chronically Ill, Public Assistance, Camp Programme, Community Xmas, Public Relations, and others. These were in addition to regular participation with the Case Work Council and its Committees.

The service is pleased to be called upon in these ways for its opinions and experiences from its special vantage point in the community. We are aware, moreover, that these activities are important in more than a community planning sense. They are an index too, as to whether our service is

integrated into our welfare structure. They indicate whether the manner in which the Service operates is complementary to the agencies, or "going it alone." We are constantly aware of the possible hazard in a Community Information Service becoming an appendage, fastening onto the body of welfare services but seeking to move in directions of its own, forgetting that without the community agencies, a referral service has lost its "raison d'etre." It is, to the Community Information Service, a source of reassurance that this is not happening when it is invited and looked to for its viewpoints on community-wide welfare problems.¹

Because the Community Information Service is in constant communication with the directors, supervisors, and workers in agencies, isolation on these relationships is not a danger; but in its relationships to the whole community of health and welfare interests as represented in the most comprehensive planning group, the Community Chest and Council. The Community Information Service, unless its communications are strengthened seems in danger of becoming as the worker quotes -- an appendage.

¹ Welfare Federation of Cleveland and Cleveland Community Chest Annual Report, 1953-1954, Community Information Service, Cleveland, Ohio, 1954.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL, VANCOUVER, AS REFLECTED IN A SUMMARY OF INQUIRIES MADE BETWEEN OCTOBER 1, 1953 AND MAY 31, 1954, IN TERMS OF SOURCE, NATURE AND DISPOSAL

It is proposed in this section of the study to examine the programme of the Community Information Service as reflected in inquiries made at the Information Service office during the period October 1953 to May 31, 1954. Because of the experimental character of the project it is important to know who uses the service, what is the nature of the inquiries presented and to what community services these inquiries are referred or directed.

The Community Chests and Councils Incorporated of America, through its department of Statistics and Recordings, published in 1951 a printed form for the compilation of statistics by information centres. This form is titled "Community Information and Referral Centres, Form M-5" and is appended.

This form was used as a basis for establishing a system of statistical recording in Vancouver. It was deemed wise in the first year to include under the headings "Source of Inquiry" and "Disposal of Inquiry" more detail indicating the use made of the centre by member agencies of Community Chest and Council, other social work and health agencies and government departments. These same types of agencies were listed under similar headings to indicate their utilization as a "point of disposal."

As is illustrated in the sample report to the (April, 1954) advisory committee (appendix AI) the "nature of inquiries"

was given in more detail. This was done partially to provide material for a proposed evaluation of the project at the close of its first twelve months service, partially as a device to promote committee discussion and interest.

The system used in recording the nature of inquiries in the Community Information Service, Vancouver, differs in three specific instances from the "3 c's" method. (1) Inquiries for addresses, phone numbers and contacts with specified agencies are included under "general community information." In the ^c 3 c's system of recording these calls are not included in the total count of inquiries, being considered in the nature of courtesy services. Since these courtesy services had in the past involved the expenditure of considerable staff time in Vancouver, answering such inquiries was regarded by the planning committee as an important part of the work of the Community Information Service. (2) The total count of "Source of Inquiries" is in terms of individuals, and if for some reason the same individual returns to the office during one month and is identified he is counted only once. (3) If, because of his situation, referral or direction of a person to more than one service is indicated, e.g. a deserted mother seeking (a) employment (b) day care for child, the names of each agency approached for services is recorded and included in the statistical count "disposal of inquiries."

As has been stated before, inquiries come to the Community Information Service through three types of contact:

- (1) By personal interview (35%)
- (2) By telephone (57%)
- (3) By letter (8%)

In a study of Information Centres made by the Community Chest and Council, Incorporated, in December 1951, of ten cities with a population less than 700,000 the types of contacts showed 59.1% by telephone, 35.1% by personal interview and 5.8% by letter. It may therefore be assumed that the Vancouver centre's proportion of intake, according to type of contact, is normal. In larger cities the proportion of telephone inquiries is greater. In smaller cities, more people appear to come "in person" to information centres. Any marked increase in the percentage of inquiries coming to the centre by personal interview might indicate that the centre is becoming recognized, unadvisedly, as a direct service agency. However, with the removal of the intake department of the public assistance agency and the veterans' emergency service to Fairview, the Community Information Service, located only three blocks from the "skidroad" may anticipate more calls in person in the winter of 1954; particularly if the unemployment situation remains grave. Therefore a check in the "type of contact" is warranted.

During the period October 1 to May 31, 1954 (167 working days), the Community Information Service received a total of 2053 inquiries, or an average of 256.6 calls a month, 12.3 calls a day.

In terms of the total population of Greater Vancouver, 532,065 (Metropolitan Health Area and Metropolitan Health Committee statistics, April 1954), this is a monthly average of 48.2 calls per 100,000 population. In December, 1951, twenty-one Information Centres in North American cities with a population varying from 245,000 to 8,575,000 showed a monthly average of 25.3 inquiries per 100,000 population.

The advisory committee is not impressed by the public response to this new service, having anticipated an intake at least as heavy as that reported by one British Advice Bureau in 1946/47 which showed over 13,000 inquiries in a twelve-month period (Appendix). This particular example had been used in presenting the plan for the Information Bureau to the Social Planning Committee and Board of Directors. The Community Information Service could accept many more general information calls but it is difficult to visualize one worker dealing annually, as is indicated in the British report, with over 3,000 family and personal problems.

SOURCE OF INQUIRIES

During the eight-month period under study, inquiries were received from 103 organizations or types of organizations, and from 1452 individuals.

Organizations

The organizations included (a) 31 financially participating member agencies of Community Chest and Council; (b) the Community Chest and Council itself; (c) 24 voluntary health, welfare and recreational agencies (not financed through the Community Chest); (4) 21 Government departments and services, and (e) 26 other community organizations. The term "type of organization" is added because in group "e" "other community organizations" individual units of the following types or organizations are not identified; churches, service clubs, business and industrial firms, ethnic societies, fraternal organizations, college fraternities

and sororities, parent teacher associations, Canadian Legion branches, political clubs, private schools, and trade unions.

While there are not comparable figures available to test this organizational intake, it would appear that there is a fairly wide-spread use of the Community Information Service by different types of organizations. While wide community interest is important, it may prove valuable to indicate some organizations which have not used the services of the Community Information Services.

Among the Community Chest and Council agencies such bodies as the Columbia Coast Mission, the Last Post Fund, The League for the Hard of Hearing, suburban V. O. N's, and Hospital auxiliaries might have no need for the services. Agencies dealing with individuals and families and staffed by non-social work staff might be expected to require occasional counsel regarding resources. In this group there are three seamen's agencies, one children's health institution and two suburban community centres. With two exceptions, none of these groups have participated extensively in the Community Chest and Council, and do not appear to have been able to relate themselves to their fellow agencies to any degree. The Community Information Service has been utilized by all anticipated government departments on the local level. On the provincial level it has not had the privilege of serving the Adult Probation Service, the Child Welfare Branch, the Hospital Insurance Service, nor, on the Federal level, the Department of Indian Affairs. Noticeably absent as a source of inquiry

the voluntary agencies not participating in the Community Chest campaign are Alcoholics Anonymous, the British Columbia Cancer Institute, and the Children's Hospital. It is difficult because of the multiplicity of organizations in a metropolitan area to point out strategic non-social work organizations which may not have utilized the Community Information Service. One might reasonably covet inquiries from the Native Brotherhood, the Board of Trade, the foreign consulates and the local Council of Women.

Having ascertained which community organizations have brought inquiries to the Community Information Service we may proceed to examine the frequency of inquiries; first in terms of the five established divisions as Source of Inquiry, and later in terms of individual opinion and organizations within these categories. Of a total of 601 inquiries, originating from organizations (as distinct from calls of individual citizens):

(1) 178 or 29.6% came from financially participating agencies, Community Chest and Council.

(2) 70 or 11.6% came from the office of the Community Chest and Council.

(3) 131 or 21.6% came from governmental departments.

(4) 74 or 12.4% from voluntary health, welfare and recreational groups not financed through Community Chest and Council.

(5) 148 or 24.6% from organizations not financed through Community Chest and Council, and not having a primary health, welfare or recreational function.

In view of the fact that most member agencies of the Community Chest and Council might be expected to have developed over the year their own resource files the fact that this group was the largest source of inquiry may be an indication of over-

lapping of function. Considering, however, that the Community Information Service was not unanimously accepted by the member agencies as a project which would be of use to them, this percentage, if not the actual number of inquiries, indicates some acceptance of the Community Information Service by the member agencies of the Community Chest and Council. Here again, the factor of "specific" information or so-called courtesy calls must be considered. It appears that in some American cities such calls would be handled by the switchboard, Community Chest and Council. The fact that there has not been a welfare directory published for two years may also account for the number of inquiries from Community Chest and Council agencies.

The second largest number of inquiries came from community organizations not participating in Chest Campaign, whose welfare function, if any, is secondary to a major function. These groups should, if the Community Information is producing good publicity material, provide the largest source of organizational inquiries. It is certainly the grouping which, in terms of its lack of direct involvement with welfare agencies, can perhaps be best served by an information project.

In terms of frequency of inquiry it is interesting to note that among the financially participating member agencies the greatest number of calls came from (1) the Y. W. C. A., (2) the Y. M. C. A., (3) the Vancouver Boys Club and (4) the Returned Soldiers Club.

The governmental bodies on all three levels making most use of the Community Information Service during this period were

(1) the City Social Service Department; (2) the Provincial Psychiatric Services and (3) the Social Welfare Branches.

From health, welfare and Recreation agencies not supported through Chest campaign, the greatest number of inquiries came from St. Paul's Hospital, Social Services, the British Columbia Camping Association, and the Canadian Red Cross Society.

Under "other agencies" we find the largest number of calls coming from business and industrial firms, churches, and service clubs.

In summarizing these facts it might be well to explore why the Y. W. C. A. with a counselling department should utilize the Community Information Service. The Y. M. C. A. referrals appear quite normal because that agency does not have case work services, and moreover its top professional staff were involved in the promotion of the information service. The Returned Soldiers Club is one of the principal resources used by the Community Information Service; this involvement plus the fact that it has a very small non-social-work staff makes the number of calls appear normal.

The greatest number of calls have come, as might be anticipated, from the most comprehensive public welfare bodies, the City Social Service Department and the Social Welfare Branches; the Provincial Psychiatric Services has the third highest number of inquiries. Normally one would anticipate that either the large multi-functional Metropolitan Health Services and the school system would rate high among the public bodies inquiring. This may be explained by the scope of services offered by the public

health nurses in the schools of Vancouver.

In the non-Chest group of health and welfare and recreation agencies there is some validity for the frequency of inquiries from the three leading agencies. The head worker at St. Paul's had a student placement in the Community Chest and Council; since the staff of the Community Information Service had administered the Camp Referral project and helped compile the Camp Directory in 1953 the inquiries from the Camping Association might be anticipated. A high percentage of Red Cross referrals might be expected in view of the public's assumption that the Red Cross distributes voluntarily raised funds in emergencies. Apparently the situation of 1940 which prompted the Red Cross Society to press for a referral centre still exists.

In the last grouping, those organizations least closely related by function to the direct health and welfare services -- business firms, churches and service clubs -- made the most inquiries and referrals. This appears appropriate. Had the Community Information Service directed its program towards the interpretation of welfare services to organized labour as many other centres have done, it might be anticipated that direct trade union referrals would be more frequent. This lack of official union inquiries would appear to be one of the most disappointing elements in the picture of intake at the Community Information Service.

Individuals as "Sources of Inquiry"

In examining the sources of inquiries we find that 1452 persons, not stating that they represented any organizational grouping, utilized the services of the Community Information Service office.

Of these, the largest number, 878 or 53.6% were not classified. We may assume that the majority of these individuals were persons making inquiries recorded as "General Information Service." While the Community Information Service tries to identify by name and address or telephone number as many inquirers as possible, this information does not in itself warrant a classification unless a study of inquiries in terms of residence in a social area were considered. To meet this situation it is planned in future to subdivide this classification - "unclassified" into "identified" and "unidentified".

Apart from "unclassified", a rough system of classification has been developed and is indicated in Table B4, where 22 types of individuals are listed with the incidence of inquiry for the eight months under study.

One very basic limitation of accuracy in such a compilation is the fact that one person might be included in several categories; e. g. New Canadian, Unemployed employable, minister - an actual "source of inquiry". In such cases, in compiling the monthly report, the secretary, to avoid duplication, must make a judgment as to where such a source of inquiry should be listed. On the whole, because of a current local and national situation around the problem of employment, this category has been maintained most fully and accurately. Frequently the monthly report has foot-notes to show that a certain number of "veterans" or "New Canadians" are listed in the total number of unemployed employables.

The largest grouping excluding "unclassified" is

"unemployed employables" with 285 individuals listed under "source of inquiry" or 12.7% of the total individuals. The third largest grouping is Old Age Assistance and Security Recipients (76 or 5.2%) and the fourth largest, New Canadians (less than 5 years in Canada) with 53 inquiries or 3.9%. All the remaining categories have less than 20 persons listed as "Source of Inquiry". While an analysis of social need among certain groups of the population should be made on the basis of two factors, (a) the groups of individuals seeking information, referral or direction, and (b) the degree to which community resources meet the problems presented by these inquiries, the figures above would appear to indicate tentatively that there is a demand for increased health and welfare services, or at least a wider interpretation of these services to (1) Unemployed employable men and women; (2) older persons; (3) newcomers to Canada.

Aside from the actual quantitative evaluation, the Community Information Service appears, in reviewing the types of individuals listed as "source of referral", to have served people in many settings, of different ages, family situations and economic levels. This whole grouping of "Individuals" is strategic, for it represents the people whom the original committee desired to serve and which they described as "the man in the street". These people come to the Community Information Service on their own initiative, without social work or organizational guidance, seeing in this new service a resource in planning some "next" step in human activity, trivial or serious, but to them currently important.

NATURE OF INQUIRIES

The British Citizens Advice Bureaux in the periods for which literature is available, seemed to emphasize their services as information centres, prepared to assist citizens in finding the factual answers to a multiplicity of types of inquiries ranging from supplies and rationing to income tax and social insurance regulations. On the other hand, the American Information and Referral Services have operated from a social work base, using in their classification of problems such terms as "placement of the aged", "home maker services", "counselling with family problems" and excluding from statistical reports such inquiries as location, personnel and appropriate contacts with welfare agencies and services.

The Vancouver Community Information Service has tried to find a mean position in classifying inquiries.. Undoubtedly the five simple classifications of the nature of inquiries are inadequate, not too well defined, and must in the future be re-examined and modified. But for the present, inquiries are classified under these broad headings:

General Community Information (1)

This includes all inquiries about health, welfare and recreational needs or services or other community resources when these inquiries are not made in regard to the problems of a specified individual or family. In the Community Information Service monthly reports this section is subdivided under the following headings:

A. Information and direction to specific agencies.

B. Requests for written material; suggestions regarding speakers or resource persons; help with speeches and papers.

C. Requests for volunteer services and offers from clubs and individuals of sponsorship; volunteer work; gifts in kind.

D. Direction regarding specific, named housing projects (a current problem).

E. Questions regarding agency function or available services in certain areas where the inquiry does not relate to the problems of an identified individual.

F. Miscellaneous. e. g. translation services, explanations regarding publicity, how to respond to "panhandling".

The other four classifications of the nature of inquiry are in contrast to classification I, used where the inquiry is in regard to a problem of a specific individual or family. They are

Health (II)

This does not include mental health problems or questions regarding hospitals, or nursing home care for older people.

Employment (III)

This includes requests for direction to sources of employment and vocation counselling and information regarding opportunities for social work employment, as well as inquiries from potential employers.

Family and Personal (IV)

This includes inquiries regarding services available for problems of individual and family relationships. It also covers mental health, housing, all forms of child placement and institutional care of all kinds of elderly people.

Financial assistance (V)

This includes all inquiries regarding assistance programs, old age security, and family assistance and mothers allowance and veterans benefits, as well as requests for emergency assistance of all kinds.

The totals listed each month under "Nature of Inquiries" are always in excess of total inquiries received at the Community Information Service because some single inquiries will need to be classified under two headings, e. g. deserted mother seeking support and daily placement for child. Therefore while total inquiries for the period are estimated as 2053, the inquiries listed under "Nature of Inquiry" is 2262.

NATURE OF INQUIRIES: STATISTICS

In assessing the nature of inquiries according to these five groupings it would appear that the information services of the Community Information Service are utilized more than its potential for referral and direction, general community information comprising 1158 or 51.2% of the total nature of inquiries as compared to inquiries regarding the specified needs and problems of individuals, 1104 or 48.8%. At eighteen American Information and Referral Bureaux reporting to the Community Chest and Council of America Inc. in December 1951, 60.0% of the calls were inquiries for help with specific problems. However, we must acknowledge that considering that the Vancouver Community Information Service in all its publicity stresses its information facilities, the percentages Information 51.5% and inquiries regarding specific

problems, 48.8% do not appear questionable.

Examining each specific classification we find that the nature of inquiries in order of frequency is:

- (1) General Community Information51.2%
- (2) Financial assistance20.1%
- (3) Family and Personal15.2% X
- (4) Employment 8.4%
- (5) Health5.1%

The fact that "financial need" occupies second place in the inquiries presented appears to indicate that the Community Information Service is reverting to the position of its predecessor organization of 1940. However, it is interesting to note that in the much more social care work centred units in the United States, the eighteen centres cited above reported in December 1951 that inquiries in regard to financial need totalled 26.3% of the total inquiries, while in nine centres with a population under 700,000 (a grouping comparable to Vancouver) the percentage was 30.9%.

The office of the Community Information Service is located close to the "skidroad", one section of the city most frequented by single men, and particularly popular as winter headquarters for workers in the seasonal trades most affected by increases in unemployment. Actually, the Community Information Service office is nearer this area than any of the three recognized agencies giving emergency financial assistance: The Salvation Army, the First United Church, and the Returned Soldier's Club (Poppy Fund).

The percentage of inquiries regarding family and personal services is disappointing to the advisory committee. It must be remembered that a much higher percentage of the persons coming to the Community Information Service than is indicated by these figures, may need services in this area. Under "Nature of Inquiries" there is recorded only those problems which inquirers present themselves; that is, the situations for which they appear to be ready to seek help. As far as single men and the families of unemployed employable persons are concerned, there has been no emphasis by Community Information Service workers in seeking to explore family and personal problems, since exploration would be unprofitable without resources in professional services to which these people may be directed.

The inquiries regarding employment are difficult of evaluation since the Community Information Service provides no direct service in this area and has only one resource - the National Employment Service. Better interpretation of the resources of the public employment agency might minimize these calls. A good percentage of these inquiries are not from persons seeking employment but from potential employers of domestic workers, labouring under the historic delusion that the welfare agencies constitute a good source of cheap labour.

The last category, Health, (5.1%) is significantly small. The scanty inquiries in this area, which unlike "financial assistance" or "employment" varies little with the season, indicate certain positive gains in the development of community services. Resources for health problems are apparently known to

most citizens. The use of an Information Centre in regard to problems of health is insignificant, because people know about the services of the public health nurse, have used the bedside nursing service of the Victorian Order of Nurses and have little difficulty in applying for such treatment as is available at provincial, municipal and general hospital clinics.

Since this study cannot possibly point up to any extent the actual kinds of people, questions and problems coming to the Community Information Service, it may be well under this heading "the Nature of Inquiries" to cite without statistical analysis some sample inquiries listed under the subheadings used in monthly reports. Examples under each heading will be drawn from the April 1954 report, which is appended.

HEALTH

A hotel manager reports that an elderly guest, very ill, will not call a doctor. The Community Information Service worker inquires regarding the guest's relatives and finding that gentleman's son is known to hotel manager asks that the hotel manager have the son, if he wishes, call the Community Information Service directly. On the basis of information given in this call, the case is referred to the medical department, City Social Service Department. City workers agree to interview either of these persons, and explore the need for nursing home or hospital care.

A man on unemployment insurance previously able to pay for private medical services inquires regarding low cost treatment for a skin condition which he fears will prevent him from obtaining employment. He is referred, after evaluation of his

financial position to the out-patients department of a general hospital.

FAMILY AND PERSONAL

(1) An employer calls on behalf of woman employee, and with her permission. She lives in the Fraser Valley and her alcoholic husband is hostile and abusive to their two teen age children. Worker refers matter to Social Welfare branch in area, who agree to visit.

(2) Young business man supporting a wife, infant, and his mother, on low income in four roomed apartment asks for counsel because his sister and her two pre-school children, deserted by husband in an eastern city have arrived unexpectedly, without funds, and plan to "settle in" at his apartment. He is referred to family agency and agrees to make his own appointment.

(3) An unemployed young man asks for referral to medical services because of the re-development of symptoms of mental illness. He is referred to the medical department, City Social Service Department because of maintenance factors and the worker's judgement that he is already unemployable.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

(1) A young girl, coming from eastern Canada by bus, having obtained a position in Vancouver Island, loses purse. Bus station employee brings her to Community Information Service. She is referred to the Counsellor, Y. W. C. A. for Travellers' Aid Service.

(2) A ward of the Superintendent of Child Welfare, an adolescent boy, hitchhiking from the interior, asks for shelter and work. He is referred to the local child protection agency.

(3) A neighbour calls regarding a woman whose husband has deserted her and whose children are hungry. Her name is given to the City Social Service Department for exploration.

DISPOSAL OF INQUIRIES

This "phrase" used by the Community Chest and Council of America, Inc., may seem to social work practitioners an unfortunate one. The Community Information Service office in Vancouver has tried to find better phraseology, but not succeeding has adopted the American heading to describe action taken at the Community Information Service office in regard to all inquiries received there. Five classifications have been used to describe disposal of inquiries:

1. Given Information Files

This category describes the answers, based on resource files, given in all cases where the inquirer, not giving a reason for his inquiry or presenting a specific health or welfare problem, asks for information regarding a named community resource or for direction to an organization or a group of organizations giving service in a certain area, e.g.

Question (i) does the Y.W.C.A. provide swimming for girls under 10 years of age?

Answer "No, this service is provided by the Water Safety Council at _____ on _____.

Question (ii) What groups offer swimming lessons to girls under 12 years of age?

Answer The Water Safety Council, with lessons at _____ on _____.

Included in this category also, probably erroneously because the function of the project debars such service, are the inquiries where - to quote the Community Chest and Council statistical form - "inquirers are given information or guidance in office - referral not necessary." Quite often the situation presented is such that there are no resources available although referral may actually appear to be necessary. While the Community Information Service does not give continued case work service in such cases the inquirers may be given brief counsel on handling the situation presented as well as possible, no resource being as yet available. While this is not actually "information given from files" it is included pragmatically, under the above heading.

2. Referral

The term "referral" is used in this study when the problem presented by an individual involved a telephone call or letter or "chit" to an agency or department.

3. Direction

The term "Direction" is used when an inquirer is told how he may himself contact the services he appears to require.

4. Did not Assist

This classification is given in cases where one of two situations prevail:

(i) There are to the knowledge of the Community Information Service no resources available to meet the specific inquiry, or the Community Information office does not have the information required on file.

- (ii) The Community Information Service worker is unable to assist
- (a) Because of limitations in the professional diagnostic services
 - (b) Because the inquirer cannot or will not accept referral or direction
 - (c) Referral is not completed in the month reported.

In the period October 1, 1953 to May 31, 1954, 757 inquiries were answered by giving information from files, 665 inquiries were referred to agencies or organizations, 782 persons were directed to resources. In 116 cases the Community Information Service did not assist the inquirer in finding the exact resources required. It should be noted that total disposals exceed total inquiries since some inquiries require direction to more than one agency. As has been stated before, comparisons between American Information and Referral Centres using the Community Chest and Council statistical form are not accurate, since the basis of classification varies in some details. However, a comparison of the percentages of referrals according to the classification listed above and similar classifications may be of interest. The Community Chest and Council's figures are based on "the disposal of inquiries in eighteen American Centres in the month of December 1951."

Even on such an uneven basis of comparison, it is evident that the Vancouver Community Information Service is operating more specifically as an Information Centre than its American counterparts.

Percentage of inquiries disposed of by four methods in 18 American Referral and Information Centres, December, 1951

Percentage of inquiries disposed of by three methods in Community Information Service Vancouver, Oct. 1, 1953 to May 31, 1954

	Percentage	Percentage	
Referred or directed	72.3	62.5	Referred or Directed
Information or guidance	18.5	32.5	given information files
Service not available, or Withdrawn request	4.0	5.0	Did not assist
Other	4.0	----	

Turning to a consideration of the community resources utilized by the Vancouver Information Service we may follow the same type of organizational classification used in the consideration of "source of inquiry." The number and the percentages of inquiries referred and directed to the five types of organizations were

1. Financially participating agencies, Community Chest and Council	218	29.7
2. The offices of the Community Chest and Council	53	7.2
3. Governmental services and departments	246	38.3
4. Health, Welfare and Recreational organizations not financed through the Community Chest	82	12.3
5. Other organizations	66	11.8

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(In addition ten persons were referred or directed to the homes or businesses of private citizens.)

From the viewpoint of a total utilization of community resources the percentages appear quite normal. One would presume that the greatest demand would be made on the public agencies whose function is to serve all citizens found eligible for their broad programme of benefits and services. It also appears logical that the second largest percentage of disposals should be to the financially participating agencies of the Community Chest and Council, as these generally include the more well established and specialized programmes of family and child welfare, group work and special health services in the private agency field.

A co-relation of the percentage figures in both "source of inquiries" and "disposition of inquiries" should indicate to what degree these five different types of agencies are involved in the programme of the Community Information Service and the direction of their involvement as a source of inquiry or as a service resource (see Appendix).

This examination of the relationship between the incidence of inquiry at and utilization as a resource by the Community Information Service seems to indicate:

(a) That Red Feather agencies used the Community Information Service to almost the same extent that the Information Service directed inquiries to them.

(b) That Governmental services were used as resources by the Community Information Service to a greater degree than their departments utilized the Information Service as a source of information and direction.

(c) That nonsocial work agencies used the Community Information Service to a much greater degree than the Community Information Service used them as resources to meet inquiries.

The last two statements appear normal and logical in view of the function of the Community Information Service, and the scope and services of the organizations in these groupings.

The degree to which the Red Feather Agencies have made inquiries at the Community Information Service was not anticipated by the advisory committee. In its tentative statement of policy it affirms "it should not be necessary for agencies staffed by professional social workers to refer individuals to the Community Information Service except for information in areas other than social work -- it is assumed that each agency has a responsibility to maintain its own resource file."¹

One must therefore presume one of four situations:

(1) That there is a high incidence of non-social workers in Red Feather Agencies.

(2) That Red Feather Agencies are using the Community Information Service largely in regard to non-social work problems.

(3) That Red Feather agencies are not developing adequate resource files.

(4) That the Community Information Service is a needed arm of social work.

As in our study of "Sources of inquiry" it may be interesting to note which organizations in each of these five groupings were utilized most frequently as points of disposal by the Community Information Service.

Among the financially participating agencies Community Chest and Council the largest number of inquiries were referred

1 Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, Minutes Advisory Committee of the Community Information Service, March 10, 1954.

or directed to (1) The Salvation Army; (2) The Returned Soldiers Club; and (3) The Family Welfare Bureau.

The public departments used most extensively as resources for the disposition of inquiries were (1) The City Social Service Department, Vancouver; (2) The National Employment Service; and (3) The Social Welfare Branches.

Within Health, Welfare and Recreation agencies not financed through the Community Chest and Council we find the largest number of inquiries disposed of by referral or direction to (1) The B. C. Camping Association; (2) Social Service Department, Vancouver General Hospital; and (3) The First United Church (Welfare Department).

The Citizen groups, to whom the largest number of inquiries were referred or directed were (1) Churches; (2) Business; and (3) Service Clubs.

REPORTING

In analyzing the total program of thirty-one Information and Referral Centres in the United States, 1951, Margaret Wilson states "In most centres we have not developed a device for learning the outcome of our referrals. Some centres indicate they are in the process of developing such a plan; a few do receive occasional reports. In one instance, where this has been general practice it has been discontinued."¹

1 National Conference of Social Work, Summary of Information Centre Questionnaire, Information Centre Workshop, Chicago, 1952. (Read by Miss Wilson.)

Without reporting, there cannot be any true evaluation of the working of an information centre. In Vancouver the Community Information Service in regard to reports from agencies has had a similar experience to that reported by the American Centres. The Committee has suggested that the staff assume the responsibility of calling agencies after each definite referral but both lack of time and some question as to the public relations connotation of such a procedure have made this appear unfeasible. One agency, The Family Welfare Bureau, has reported on each of the cases referred to it during the period of study. But, in a total of 665 direct referrals there has been in the period only 259 reports from all agencies and organizations, and in some cases unsolicited reports from inquirers themselves have been included in these reports. The fact that some agencies are legally debarred from reporting is recognized and respected. Perhaps at this point the Community Information Service might pursue a policy of encouraging agencies to report to them only as to whether

- (1) The inquirer arrived at the agency,
- (2) The referral was or was not appropriate,
- (3) the agency is or is not exploring the possibilities of giving services or benefits to the inquirer.

CHAPTER V

C O N C L U S I O N

It will have been recognized that any opinions expressed in this study are put forward by the professional social worker in the Community Information Service, Vancouver. They are therefore, to an unavoidable degree, subjective. In order to gain a more objective evaluation of the Community Information Service, twelve key organizations related to the Community Information Service in 1953-54, by inquiry, referral or direction were asked to reply to a five point questionnaire (see Appendix C). The answers submitted to these five questions by eight agencies will be used at the appropriate points of reference in this chapter. The questions asked concerned:

1. The degree to which referrals from the Community Information Service had been appropriate.
2. The professional services rendered by the Community Information Service staff in the process of referral.
3. The accuracy of information given to agencies by the Community Information Service.
4. The degree to which the Community Information Service is referring or directing to service agencies, persons who would not reach such services on their own initiative.
5. The continuing need for a central information referral service in Vancouver.

It is hoped that this very minimum consultation will to some extent limit the undesirable element of subjectivity apparent in this study.

To date, as far as can be ascertained, basic criteria for the evaluation of information and referral services have not been developed. Irene Buckley in a paper entitled "Information and Referral" in New York, 1951, discusses at length but does not formulate specifically, certain criteria applicable to the operation of an information service in health and welfare. She describes six "essentials in a good information centre." These "essentials" may be paraphrased to constitute rough criteria for this evaluation. They are:

1. The degree to which the centre is staffed by experienced, professional social workers, skilled in short contact and telephone interviews.
2. The degree to which adequate and well documented resource files are maintained.
3. The degree to which a recording procedure, adapted to the function of the service is established.
4. The degree to which the centre provides an adequate interpretation of health and welfare services, including its own, to the community.
5. The degree to which the centre interprets, to groups capable of acting on this information, its appraisal of unmet community needs and its concern for the extension and maintenance of certain health and welfare and recreation services.
6. The degree to which the centre demonstrates its ability to function in co-operation with voluntary agencies and departments of government offering direct services in health, welfare and recreation.

In addition to an examination of the work of the Community Information Service according to these criteria, it is planned at the close of this chapter to examine the per capita cost of the centre and, finally, to evaluate the need for a continuation of this service in the city of Vancouver.

APPLICATION OF PROPOSED CRITERIA

1. Personnel

Professional literature suggests and experience in the Community Information Service, Vancouver, seems to emphasize the importance of employing within central information-referral offices social workers who meet certain minimum standards of professional education, experience and personal qualifications. Certain desirable minimum standards were indicated in the original report, 1951, on The Need for a Community Information Referral Service in Vancouver. They included

(a) graduation from a school of social work or at a minimum level eligibility as concerns the professional organization the Canadian Association of Social Workers;

(b) two to five years experience in social work depending on degree of professional preparation;

(c) skill in public relations;

(d) administrative ability;

(e) personal maturity; and

(f) preference to a Vancouver resident.

On the basis of the first year of experimentation it would appear that while these recommendations are basically sound certain areas of training and competency should be stressed. The following basic standards for the employment of a Director of the Community Information Service, Vancouver, are therefore suggested as minimum.

(a) Graduation from a recognized School of Social Work.

(b) A working experience at supervisory level and a working or student experience in two types of agency settings (e.g. family service agency and social service department, hospital or family service agency and public welfare department).

- (c) Skill in public relations.
- (d) Administrative ability.
- (e) Personal maturity, particularly as evidenced in colleague relationship.
- (f) Familiarity with the history, sociological pattern and organizational network of the local community.

In the original plan for the establishment of an information referral centre two social workers were proposed as minimum professional staff. If this plan had been financially feasible it might have been possible to obtain collectively the skills and experience described above. However, it would seem unrealistic to demand professional service from persons of this calibre at an annual salary of \$3,600.00.

While intake statistics do not appear at present to warrant the employment of two social workers in this establishment, the recommendation of the original committee is, on the basis of this study, sound and worthy of exploration. With two workers every inquiry might be handled on a professional level first. Clerical assistants and volunteers could be called in on resource finding when the presenting problem is one requiring only factual information. Recording would be improved, the burden of administration and public relations shared and most important of all, the vagueness of the service given to unidentified or unclassified inquirers seeking general information would be brought into proper professional focus.

In the questionnaire forwarded to twelve key organizations only one question related specifically to professional

performance. It was:

Has their experience at or with the Community Information Service aided or impeded persons referred in utilizing to advantage the services of your agency?

There appeared to be a general agreement that, on the whole, persons referred to direct service agencies had been aided in this process (see Appendix C). The degree of interpretation and support given inquirers within the function of this project is the principal criteria of professional adequacy. It may be that some of the persons answering this question were not aware of the dangers of developing neurotic or negative relationships at the point of referral. These dangers are minimized when the referral worker has a long and rich experience in extended case work services under supervision.

The present incumbent of the position of secretary, Community Information Service has, through experience and residence, developed a good working knowledge of the Community, fair administrative skills and some ability in dealing with the general public and volunteers. There is, however, evidence in this study that her lack of case work experience is reflected in the professional services of the centre and in the relationship of the centre to those case work and group work agencies employing largely professional social workers. There are very visible limitations apparent in her acceptance within the professional grouping of the parent agency.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the Community

Chest and Council should in future seek to employ in the Community Information Service two fully qualified social workers with a broad experience in case work, preferably at the supervising level.

2. Recording

A. Statistical. It would appear that the somewhat primitive methods of statistical recording evolved in the early months of the project have proved relatively effective in compilations and evaluation. Two suggestions appear warranted:

(i) That all terms, e. g. "business", "volunteer", "marital problem", be defined in order to promote accuracy and continuity in recording.

(ii) That the Community Information Service forego the extended documentation of inquiries and utilize the forms and methods recommended by the Community Chest and Councils of America, Inc., reporting to that body annually and using the materials available as a result of this connection in evaluating the work of the Vancouver Information Referral Service.

B. Client Records. With the type of staff described in an earlier part of this chapter there is a likelihood that more detailed case records will be maintained. The present short records have proved accurate and adequate on agency inquiry. Since many American centres report their concern regarding the seemingly over-verbose records maintained in information referral centres it is suggested that records should remain brief and focussed on the short contact function of the project.

3. Resource Files

The validity of resource files can, as has been stated before, only be tested properly from the angle of the person or

organization inquiring. To ascertain roughly the quality of Community Information Service in this regard the following question was included in the questionnaire sent to the twelve agencies and provided the following answers:

"Has your agency found the information resources of the Community Information Service useful? Has the information given been accurate and focussed on your inquiry?"

Affirmative, and, in most cases appreciative, replies were received from agencies in answer to this question (see Appendix C).

It is presumed that if information given to agencies was accurate that the larger group of individual inquirers was similarly served. However, the following suggestions regarding the future development of resource files are presented.

(i) That priority be given to the development of the third file "Subjects" e. g. "Marriage Counselling" Resources for. "Victims of Fire", agency responsibility.

(ii) That the Community Information Service having developed three basic files (a) Alphabetical Index; (b) Organizational Listing; (c) Subject Index, should make known to the Social Planning Body its readiness to participate with the Divisions and the Public Relations Department of the Community Chest and Council, and with agencies in the compilation of a comprehensive "Resource Manual and Directory." On the basis of experience within the Community Chest and Council it would appear advisable to publish this manual in such a form as to be easily revisable. The usefulness of such a Manual is limited to the timeliness of its information.

(iii) That, until such time as the Manual described above is available, the Community Information Service should keep agencies aware of its special resource listings (e. g. Ethnic groups, service clubs, living accommodation, older people), and on agency request develop other special listings.

4. Service

X During the period under study the Community Information Service did not make any significant contribution to social planning except in drawing to the attention of the Planning Committee the increasing number of inquiries for financial assistance from unemployed employable men and their dependants. Careful records had been kept on each inquiry from this group of citizens and in the monthly reports they were sublisted under the following headings:

- (1) Residents¹
 - A. Families³
 - B. Single men⁴
- (2) Transients²
 - A. Families
 - B. Single men

Definitions, Community Information Service, Vancouver.
1. Residents. Persons having resided in Vancouver or an adjoining municipality for a continuous period of twelve months or more immediately preceding date of inquiry. 2. Transients. Persons having resided in Vancouver or an adjoining municipality for less than twelve continuous months in the period immediately preceding date of inquiry. 3. Families. Persons residing with spouses, or spouses and children. 4. Single men or women. Self dependent men or women; single, married, divorced, widowed, or separated, not residing with spouse or children (includes inquirers residing in homes of parents, or other relatives without spouses or children).

It is significant that although the same situation had existed in the previous winter (1953), because the Community Information Service was able as early as November, 1953, to distinguish a rise in such inquiries, the request for the consideration of this problem went before the Board of Directors, Community Chest and Council, two months earlier than in the previous year.

The ability of the Community Information Service to act in this area of social action is related to the matter of personnel. The secretary, to bring unmet needs to the advisory committee must have the opportunity and the ability to relate to the groups within the Community Chest and Council where gaps in service and needed extensions in existing agencies are discussed. It is not sufficient to point up numerically the number of inquiries regarding certain types of services, "housing for older people", "pre-school centres", "recreation for young adults in industry", etc.

The workers in a community information service should be able to define what types of people, under what situation, living in which districts are inquiring for such services and to indicate also which agencies currently give these services, to whom, and how. In such an evaluation there should be a warm understanding and acceptance of the limitations of staff and funds available to agencies. After discussion with groups of agencies, if possible, or failing that, consultation with individual agencies, the worker would be in a better position to bring the "unmet need" under discussion to the Community Information Service advisory committee, and through it to the planning body, with agency and committee backing. Unless this is done

in a well organized process, broad suggestions of "unmet needs" may precipitate unwise and hasty recommendations from laymen or antagonize agencies by inferences that they are not meeting their avowed obligations to give a certain type of service to the community.

The process of pointing up unmet needs requires, therefore, not only careful statistical evaluation but differentiation, preliminary consultation, careful presentation to the advisory committee and planning body, and eventually data sufficient to support action by the Board of Directors. It calls for high skills in community organization.

Since the function of pointing up unmet needs is one of the defined responsibilities of the Community Information Service it is suggested that it be given higher priority in the total program of the project and that careful processes of community organization undergird each request for exploration and action brought through the advisory committee to the proper authorities.

5. Interpretation

The situation regarding the public relations program or the interpretation of the Community Information Service has been described in detail in an earlier part of this study. The lack of an adequate public relations program is so serious that it may eventually lead to the dissolution of this service. People must know the Community Information Service exists. Many have stated their surprise that the Community Chest and Council offers such a useful service. Public response to each publicity venture has

been good. People are basically interested in the work of the centre. Somehow, the Community Information Service Committee should seek to gain representation in the Public Relations Section of the Community Chest and Council, and there interpret to the Executive group of that section the value of the Community Information Service if only from a contributor's angle. Once the Public Relations Committee is brought to a point where it no longer judges the work of the Community Information Service to be un-newsworthy, it should not be too difficult for representatives of both groups to plan cooperatively a twelve month publicity program. This program need not be press centred. It is the daily papers which are reported in being unwilling to publicize the Community Information Service. Experience in the United States indicates that radio and public transport posters provide the best media for informing the public of the resources of information referral centres.

If joint consultation and planning with the Public Relations Section does not produce an adequate program of publicity the Advisory Committee, Community Information Service, may be forced to seek permission from the Board of Directors to develop independently its own progress.

6. Co-operative Relationships with Agencies

As outlined in Chapter 3, the Community Information Service has received inquiries from 103 organizations and referred or directed persons to 120 organizations. This is a fair community coverage for a first year of operation.

Agencies have a right to anticipate that referrals from an information-referral centre will reflect a knowledge of and a respect for the service that agency, as distinct from all other agencies, is able to render to people who meet its requirements, or are able to use its services. That is the problem posed in the following question.

"In terms of the purpose and function of your agency, have the individuals referred from the Community Information Service been persons whom your intake department would accept normally for exploration of their situation or for services?"

From the answers received from expert agencies it would appear that referrals have, on the whole, been appropriate (see Appendix C).

Experience in other centres and in Vancouver has indicated three situations or attitudes which hamper the development of good relationships between referral and direct service agencies. While the content of this study has not permitted discussion of these factors to any degree, they are so fundamental as to warrant inclusion in this concluding chapter. In each instance the situation is amplified by quotations from the writings of Miss Ruth Chastel, one of the few social workers to produce definitive material on the social work aspects of Information Referral services.

To aid in the development of referral service - direct service agency relationships there is a need to

(a) Accept the Limitations of the Referral Process

There has not been within the Community Information Service or the agencies in Vancouver, an acceptance of the fundamental limitations inherent in the reference process.

"The referral agency prepares the client for the new experience, but beyond that the establishment of an ingoing relationship is the responsibility of the direct service agency. In the last resort, anyone - however skillful - who refers a client to a new resource cannot go beyond establishing that the request made falls within the agency's function. Each referral has an unavoidably experimental quality to it until the applicant and the agency get acquainted."

1

(b) Accept Respect and Utilize Agency Differences

There has not been always a recognition of the value of agency differences.

"One of the fundamental concepts of social work is the recognition of the values of differences."

2

"As with individuals or groups, so with agencies, there must be developed a respect for the other agency's integrity and a recognition of its right to make its own policy."

3

"Fundamental to good referral or a co-operative relationship is respect for and appreciation of what the other agency has to give."

4

(c) Refer in a Relaxed, Confident Way

Referrals have sometimes been stiff and mechanical rather than relaxed and exploratory.

"It is well for agency personnel to have some sense of informality and flexibility in making referrals; it is not necessary to prove an air tight case."

5

1 Chastel, Ruth, "What are the Special Skills Required for the Brief Contact or Referral Interview," p. 5. National Conference of Social Work, Cleveland, Ohio. 1950.

2 Chastel, Ruth, "The Referral Agency and the Community Resource," p. 84. A report on two conferences, Information and Referral, Health and Welfare Council of New York, 1952.

3 Ibid.

4 Chastel, Ruth, "What are the Special Skills Required," op. cit., p. 5.

5 Chastel, Ruth, "The Referral Agency and the Community Resource," op. cit., p. 34.

(d) Direct Service Agencies to Report the General Outcome of Referral

No consistent attempt has been made to encourage direct service agencies to "report back" to Community Information Service.

"It is always courteous to inquire whether the referral source worker wishes to be acquainted with the outcome of the intake interview, for many such agencies want this data to evaluate the effectiveness of their service!"⁶

Relationships between the Vancouver Community Information Service and the direct service agencies would be more truly co-operative and helpful to inquiring citizens if, as is suggested, both parties would (a) accept the logical limitations of professional referral; (b) recognize and value agency differences, and (c) develop relaxed and flexible attitudes when making or receiving referrals. In addition the referral agency (d) should be made aware whenever possible, of the general disposition of the case. .

In summary, against the six criteria developed for use in this study it would appear that (1) the Community Information Service requires professional staff with different social work qualifications than are found in present personnel. (2) That a comprehensive three-part plan of resource filing is under development, and that generally resource files have proved adequate to agency demand (3) that recordings on individual inquiries are limited to brief card records; that statistical recording can be carried on more effectively in cooperation with the

1 Chastel, Ruth, "What are the Special Skills Required for the Brief Contact in Referral Interview," p. 6. National Conference of Social Work, Cleveland, Ohio, 1953.

Statistical Department, Community Chests and Councils of America, Inc.; (4) that the publicity program requires the consideration of the Public Relations Section; (5) that the development of a process for pointing out unmet needs to be explored, in cooperation with direct service agencies and (6) that while agency relationships appear to be good, through particular emphasis on certain positive elements of the referral process, they may be bettered.

THE COST OF THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

Before the Community Information Service was accepted partially as a Community Chest and Council central administrative service its total monthly expenses including overhead averaged \$576.32, or with an average monthly inquiry of 256.6 persons, a per capita cost of \$2.24. This per capita cost is relatively level with that reported in the referral centres of the city of New York where in 1948 the per capita costs were \$2.25. Is this expenditure justified in Vancouver in terms of either individual need or priority of service?

This sum (\$2.24) may seem a high cost per person, but it must be noted that in terms of professional service it represents a quarter hour of the time of the average professionally trained social worker (Grade II Provincial Welfare Services). Can more be bought with this money in any other setting?

In terms of individual need, it is difficult to make a judgment on the per capita cost of the service. It would not normally be justifiable for an organization maintained by citizen

contribution to expend \$2.24 each time a citizen receives information as to where he may be vaccinated or dispose of used clothing. The sum appears insignificant when we estimate what it would have cost the community to maintain the elderly man who wanted and found a part time job, not "relief"; or the husband who would have to "quit work" if he did not have some respite, during his wife's illness, from household responsibilities. Even in simple calls for information there may be unknown elements of urgency which cannot be estimated in dollars and cents.

From the viewpoint of priority in service one must acknowledge that the financially participating agencies of the Community Chest and Council were not unanimous in wishing to share "the welfare dollar" with the Community Information Service. Certainly in an evaluation of the Community Information Service planned for the fall of 1954 it must be judged not only on the basis of its own services, but in relation to other projected plans, such as area councils or a home for working adolescents, as well as against the needs of all agencies to expand their direct service programmes.

To date the officials of the Community Chest and Council have not stated that the Community Information Service has relieved the professional staff of any onerous tasks. Until such a statement is made it is only possible to suggest that with the burden of interviewing individuals and answering general information inquiries removed to a great degree from the responsibilities of the Divisional secretaries, the Community Chest and Council is now in a position to use the skills of its professional

staff more efficiently and therefore more economically.

Four suggestions might be made as to how this relatively high per capita cost could be reduced to a more legitimate figure:

1. By the development of a better publicity program whereby more people would be made aware of the service, and use it at point of need.

2. By the amalgamation, through a broad, democratic process of the central service units of Community Chest and Council; namely, Social Service Index, Camp Referral Project, Christmas Cheer Bureau. There is also a suggestion that following the pattern of many other cities the function of recruiting, training and placing volunteers in health and welfare agencies on a community-wide basis might be transferred from a member agency to the Community Chest and Council. In such a "Services Department" overhead would be reduced, overlapping services minimized and resource files centralized. This plan, which is to be regarded as a long term development would require qualified social work supervision. It has proved effective in other communities.

3. By attaching the information service to a direct service agency, preferably one giving broad family services. This again would possibly cut down overhead but would in the opinion of the writer not be as acceptable to the public as the present somewhat "anonymous" setting of the Community Information Service.

4. By discontinuing the Community Information Service and through the offices of the functional Divisions, Community Chest and Council, and the Public Relations department helping the several agencies to perfect their own referral processes at the same time providing them with well documented resource manuals as tools for inter-agency referral.

There is, according to the answers received from agencies some degree of conviction that the people who call the Community Information Service would, eventually, without its services reach the proper source of help.

If persons inquiring at the Community Information Service would, as the agencies' reply indicates, eventually reach, without Community Information Service intervention, the proper point of service, is there a continuing need for the service? This question was put to the twelve key agencies in the following form:

The twelve month period of experiment in the Community Information Service being concluded, do you see a need for the continuation of this project as part of the central administrative structure of the Community Chest and Council?

FROM THE AGENCY VIEW POINT

Of the eight answers received, one agency declined to reply on the basis of the small number of referrals. The others were generally in favour of the continuation of the service because:

(a) Through consultation between agency workers and referral centre workers, the Community Information Service assisted their agency in planning with clients as to how they could reach and utilize community resources.

(b) Through its information function, the Community Information Service served the general public and organizations not related closely to social welfare programs.

(c) The Community Information Service relieved the Community Chest and Council staff of time-consuming duties and enabled thereby a richer program of community organization indirectly beneficial to the agencies as well as to the public weal.

These answers indicate that the agencies on the whole are confident that the public understands and uses their services. Since we have no way to estimate the feeling of the individuals as to the value of their use of the Community Information Service we must give due consideration to the implied, if not declared, opinion that the Community Information Service is not needed as a "channel" to agency services but merely brings the client to the agency earlier. In any evaluation of the Community Information Service carried through by the Community Chest and Council or other groups, it might be well to include some study of the reaction of active inquirers to this question. The agencies' assurance of the client's ability to reach needed services may not be tenable. In a community-wide program geared to the prevention of family breakdown, disease and privation, the term "eventual" may, in fact, be translated "too late". Undoubtedly the agencies stand ready to serve. The degree of ignorance about agency services and the negative attitudes towards welfare agencies among some sections of the public are factors worthy of investigation.

THE VIEWPOINT OF THE STUDY COMMITTEE

The committee commissioned in 1951 to study whether Vancouver needed a central Information Referral Service brought to the Social Planning Committee an affirmative report based essentially on two conclusions:

(1) There was a need to give individuals and organizations immediate and accurate information as to where services could be found for assisting them with personal and other problems; one place, where people may go when faced with the overwhelming problem "which agency can help?"

(2) There was a need to gain public acceptance of all welfare services through a continuing demonstration of the existence of and the co-operation between social work services, public and private; and particularly to give to potential consumers and contributors tangible evidence of the phrase "Red Feather Service."

THE VIEWPOINT OF THE PUBLIC

A trade union paper published in Vancouver appended to its announcement of the opening of the Community Information Service, the following comment on the need for such a service:

As Bill has been telling us for a long time, when one man is unemployed, that constitutes a DEPRESSION for him -- and by the same token, even if there are 1001 Welfare Agencies, when one man needs such help and doesn't know how or where to go about it, none of them is any good to him.¹

1 The Steel Worker, Vancouver Area Council, United Steelworkers of America, p.

There appears to be a remarkable potential in the use of such a service by individual citizens. This potential is not limited to finding services for people, it includes the interpretation of social work in such a way that people gain a sense of pride and involvement in the health and welfare program of their city.

Social work like many other professions, however humanitarian and democratic in its modern approach cannot escape entirely the weight of history. People find it difficult to accept the premise "Everybody Benefits Everybody Gives," when they have vivid memories of soup kitchens, relief camps, prying welfare investigators, and dreary institutions. For varying components of reasons, these same people seem to find it relatively simple to call on information services, "where there is no stigma felt, no requirements to meet, and where the inquirers can remain anonymous, and if he wishes unseen."

There is little doubt that the Community Information Service, Vancouver, came into existence because social agencies had to some degree defaulted in the area of public relations. This service, like its predecessor in 1940 is to be evaluated in the fall of 1954. Should it no longer be deemed a necessary part of the Community Chest and Council program it is to be hoped that the close of the experiment will be the occasion for full inter-agency discussion. It may not be too late for social work

1 "Information and Referral - What we Mean," Information and Referral - a report of two conferences, Health and Welfare Council of New York, New York, 1952.

agencies to accept the fact that despite soaring case loads there are hundreds of citizens who do not know how to reach or use the social work resources of the city of Vancouver, at a point where preventive work is possible. Family breakdown as well as tuberculosis and diphtheria can be reduced by public education and interpretation and with an equal if not greater saving in money, manpower, and morale. If because of its eighteen short months of experience, and by its closing, the Community Information Service can convince the agencies, the Community Chest and the public welfare departments of the practical and humanitarian values of continuous, attractive, and accessible interpretation of their services, its existence will have been well warranted.

Central information referral agencies exist only because of the complexity of the social work structure. Unlike most of the recently developed settings for social work practice, these projects were established through citizen rather than professional demand. The ordinary man believed he had devised for himself a guide through the maze of inter-related welfare structures. Information referral centres are, in the best connotation of the word, the result of a "people's" movement.

While they have proved useful they afford only a partial, if convenient resource for the citizen who wants to understand and on occasion use the services of the health and welfare agencies he supports through taxation or voluntary contribution. They should not, and by function cannot, relieve direct service agencies of their historically accepted responsibilities in developing

their own programs of public relations, resource identification and professional referral.

It is quite possible that some time in the future the citizens who prompted the establishment of information referral projects will make more comprehensive and far reaching demands of welfare planning groups for basic changes in the administrative structure of welfare services. To meet these demands, there may develop as a result of long, careful, and one might anticipate, painful process of community organization, a new type of welfare agency. These agencies, sometimes created through merger, will be capable of meeting from within one administrative structure, the health and social needs of whole individuals and whole families.

There is evidence that the profession of social work itself is aware of the need for a basic professional approach to social problems. Some schools of social work are already seeking to focus their program of professional education on preparation for generalized rather than specialist practice.

Within the future welfare structure the need for inter-agency referral and with it the need for central information referral services will diminish. Referral is at best a clumsy process denying to no small degree accepted concepts of the professional relationship between client and worker.

Until these two related movements become more visible in our communities there would appear to remain a need for central information referral services to hear and channel the ordinary man's age-old query "What shall I do?".

APPENDIX A I

The Report of a Committee set up by the
Social Planning Committee to investigate
the need for a central information-refer-
ral centre.

Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver
June 19, 1951.

REFERRAL CENTRE

June 18, 1951

It is my pleasure as Chairman, to present the report of the Committee appointed by the Social Planning Committee to bring in a report on the need for a Referral Centre, its function and personnel.

To the members of this Committee, Mrs. Exner, Mrs. Selman, Miss Gourlay, Miss Stanford and Messrs Stratton, Cowley, Allan, Jones, Harvey and Jackson, I should like to express my sincere appreciation for the time and thought they have given to the preparation of this report. It has been a joy and privilege to work with them and I am indeed grateful to Mrs. Angus for this opportunity.

My thanks go also to Miss McPhedran of the Family Welfare, Miss Amy Leigh of the Prov. Welfare, Mr. Chambers of the City Social Service, and Mr. Maynard Joiner of Famous Players for granting me interviews and for very helpful advice and encouragement.

Upon coming to a unanimous decision at our first meeting that an Information and Referral Centre should be established in Vancouver, the Committee divided into small groups to study the various phases of organizing a Centre. We, therefore had available at our second meeting, well thought out written reports on Financing, Budgetting, Location, Services, Public Relations, Advisory Committee, Personnel, and the place of an Information Centre in the Community Chest. These reports were the basis for further discussion and the drafting of this final report.

REPORTS FROM MAJOR CITIES:

Reports from four cities - Toronto, Columbus, Boston, and Milwaukee - on the operation of Information Centres in their respective areas were also studied by the Committee. All of these Centres are operated as a department of the local Welfare Council of Social Agencies, and two of them, Milwaukee and Columbus, grew out of a service for veterans.

TORONTO:

One function of the Toronto Information Centre is to explain the Social Services to organized groups, and how best to use them. The referral of individuals is also an important function and this Centre endeavours to keep its finger on the pulse of unmet needs.

BOSTON:

The Boston Referral Centre is a Unit of the Public Relations Department of the United Community Services and aims to be a "central point to which the public can turn with questions of all kinds referring to social work". The staff do a good deal of speaking to organized groups in Industry.

MILWAUKEE:

The Milwaukee "Community and Veterans Information Service" was established on its present basis in June 1950 on the recommendation of the survey of Milwaukee County Health and Welfare Services. It is interesting to note that in 1947 a committee had studied the matter and consulted with seven large cities but could not decide on the need nor convince the majority

Milwaukee (cont'd)

of the local agencies of the need. The new Committee was appointed sixteen months before the Centre was opened. The staff consists of a stenographer, Veterans' Counsellor and the Director. They say the support of the local agencies is gratifying. Statistical reports were enclosed.

COLUMBUS:

The Columbus Ohio Centre was set up in January 1949 following the presentation of a study Committee to the Council of Social Agencies in the previous March. This study committee of seventeen members obtained information from eleven cities and some national agencies. Of the eleven cities only two reported difficulty in establishing the project, and, in both cases, this was, according to the cities' own analysis, due to personality factors and "the failure of the central information service to establish effective relationships with certain key agencies". The study committee pointed out the necessity for a social diagnostic service at the Centre, in order that a proper referral can be made. A statistical report for the year 1950 - and for March 1951, were enclosed, 5581 requests were received in 1950 and 5249 in 1949. The range of "subjects of enquiry" is greater than in the Milwaukee report.

Our next step was to determine where such an Information Centre would fit into the needs of Vancouver - from various angles.

The Committee is convinced that there is a great need in Vancouver for a central office, the specific function of which would be to supply to groups and individuals immediate and adequate information as to where services could be found for assisting them in personal and other problems.

In a considerable number of cases, the queries received will not involve any 'case work' and can be answered directly by the Centre from its broad background of accumulated knowledge and experience, a background not at present possessed by any single agency.

In those cases where special advisory skills are required, there will exist in almost every case some agency capable of dealing with this problem, and whereas too often today the client tries one agency after another, before he finds the right one, or gives up in despair, it would be the function of the Centre to put him in contact with the right agency from the start.

Even where no specific assistance can be given, the mere fact of receiving a sympathetic hearing and of knowing that every avenue of aid has been explored is itself of considerable moral encouragement to a person in trouble.

The Centre will be of value to other social agencies, not only in sifting queries before passing them on to one agency or another, but also in supplying information to the agencies themselves.

The Centre through its direct relationship with the public would interpret to the citizens the services of both public and private agencies.

Sheet 3

The role that can be played by an Information Centre in the building of good public relations is very clear. From the Community Chest and Council viewpoint, an Information Centre will provide tangible evidence of the phrase "Red Feather Service". Perhaps the greatest value lies in its simplicity. It is one place where people in need of service may go for help. Those who need services and those who are trying to help others locate services - are not faced with the near overwhelming problem of "which agency can help". This applies equally well to labour union officials, personnel managers in industry, service club members, private agencies which are not Chest supported, police, lawyers, doctors and many others. From a long range viewpoint, an Information Centre will assist more than any other factor, in gaining public acceptance of welfare services, for it is a continuing demonstration of the existence of, and cooperation among, social work services, public and private.

In a time of crisis, the Centre would be of great value in familiarizing citizens with emergency measures to be taken and in interpreting the numerous regulations which might have to be imposed on short notice at such a time.

The variety of questions will be legion, but the experience of an English Advisory Bureau handling over 1,000 queries a month indicates the broad classifications into which they are likely to fall, (after eliminating queries connected with war conditions).

	Eng.	Amer.
Family and personal problems	38	23
Housing and rent queries	19	12
Queries arising out of illhealth	$8\frac{3}{4}$	10
Social insurance enquiries	$8\frac{1}{2}$	7
Miscellaneous	25	48

Miscellaneous question will include enquiries relating to education, employment, recreation, - legal and financial matters and information about agencies and survey reports.

For the purpose of organizing an Information Centre in Vancouver, we recommend that a Committee, consisting of a Chairman and twelve to fifteen members, be appointed by the Social Planning Committee.

This organizing Committee will operate directly under the Social Planning Committee. We recommend that, at a later date, further consideration be given to the question of the desirability of appointing a larger Advisory Committee and the possibility of the Information Centre being given the status of a department of the Community Chest and Council.

We suggest that the Chairman of the Committee be appointed by the Social Planning Committee and in order that as wide a representation as possible be achieved, the following nominees be asked to serve on the Committee -

Mr. Frank Carlisle
Mr. James Bury
Mr. P.R.U. Stratton
Mr. Arthur Cowley
Mrs. Dean Mansell
Miss Peggy Stanford
Miss M. Gourlay
Miss Trenna Hunter

Miss Martha Moscrop
Mrs. Helon Exner
Mr. Hodgson (Kinsmen Club)
Mr. Maynard Joiner
Miss Lillian Carscadden
Mr. Ray Fairbairn
Mr. Halford Wilson
Mr. Kennedy

We recommend that this Information Centre be housed in a centrally located ground floor office, in or near the Community Chest, and we are satisfied that such a place would be available at a rental not exceeding one hundred dollars a month.

We suggest that sources available for funds are organizations outside the Community Chest, such as service clubs, Junior League and other similar bodies, also certain private individuals whose contribution to this project would not prejudice their contribution to Community Chest. We recognize that in seeking such funds, there must be available a clear cut statement of the need, functions and estimated budget requirements for the operation of the Centre for its first year.

We propose a minimum budget of \$7,800.00 as follows:

Rent and Light	\$ 1,200
Salaries	3,600
"	1,800.
Equipment	750
Office Supplies	200
Telephone	250
	<u>\$ 7,800.00</u>

If the necessary funds are available, we suggest that the Centre be operated by a staff of three - a Director, Assistant Director, and a Steno-Receptionist. However, on the proposed minimum budget, it would be necessary to eliminate temporarily the office of Asst. Director.

The following personnel qualifications are suggested -

Director

- (a) a qualified M.S.W. plus a minimum of two years experience in social work.
- or (b) a qualified B.S.W. plus four years experience in social work
- or (c) a person eligible for membership in the C.A.S.W. plus five years experience in social work.

A mature person, male or female, skilled in public relations, with administrative ability - one who would merit the confidence of Social Agencies, business people and clients. Preference should be given to a local person.

Asst. Director:

Similar qualifications, with more emphasis on ability to meet clients and less on administrative ability.

Several committee members registered the opinion that it is possible that a person of superior abilities and with broad related work experience, but without the academic qualifications as stated above, might be selected for the position of director or assistant director.

Secretary: should not only be experienced in office procedure but should excel in meeting the public, have a warm telephone manner and be able to meet the pressures of people in great need. Preference for person of mature appearance and manner.

This Committee is pleased to recommend to the Social Planning Committee that an Information and Referral Centre be established as soon as possible in the City of Vancouver, under the sponsorship of the Community Chest and Council. The "statement of purpose" will be -

- A. To give accurate information to any individual or organization on the health and welfare and related services in the Greater Vancouver area.
- B. To refer persons to the proper source of services. (Great skill will be required in the short contact interview to ensure that the real need of the client is ascertained, and also that the client does not look to the Information Centre for continuing service.)
- C. To direct people who wish to offer their services in the health and welfare field, to the proper agency (for example, the Volunteer Bureau).
- D. To accumulate data which will show what needed services are lacking or inadequate.
- E. To prepare and maintain a directory of health, welfare, and other related services for distribution in the community.

Mrs. Alex Eastwood
Chairman
Information-Referral Centre.

APPENDIX A - 2

STATEMENT OF POLICY, Community Information Service, presented to but not endorsed in full by the Committee on the Community Information Service, March, 1954.

0

COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL OF GREATER VANCOUVER

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

STATEMENT OF POLICY

DECEMBER, 1953.

The Community Information Service is an integral part of the Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver and is by purpose and practice related to the overall planning for health and welfare services in the City of Vancouver.

The services of the Community Information office will, therefore, be based on the aims accepted by the Board of Directors of the Community Chest and Council when the inauguration of this service was approved, namely:

1. To give accurate information to any individual or organization on the health and welfare and related services in the Greater Vancouver area.
2. To refer persons to the proper source of service.
3. To direct people who wish to offer their services in the health and welfare field to the proper agency.
4. To accumulate data which will show where needed services are lacking or inadequate.
5. To prepare and maintain a directory of health, welfare and other community services for distribution in the community.

I. In regard to function and method of referral of individuals:

- A. The services of the Community Information office are directed towards determining the nature of the problems and, if necessary, making referrals to the appropriate agency or service, giving the client wherever possible, a choice of services.
- B. The function of the Community Information office is to bring clients and services together and not to offer either continuing case work or any financial assistance either direct or indirect.
- C. Actual determination of eligibility for assistance or service is to remain the prerogative of the appropriate agency.
- D. Individuals calling the Community Information office on behalf of other persons will be asked to identify themselves. If possible contact will be made with the persons actually needing the services.
- E. The resources of the Social Service Index will be used in all cases where referral to specific health and welfare or allied professional services is indicated and/or where the use of the Index may facilitate professional consideration of the request.
- F. Any agency active in the area of problems presented by a client during the previous three year period will be called before the client is directed to another service, and if, after this consultation, the services of another agency are indicated, workers in the new agency will be informed what other agencies are, or have been, active in this case.
- G. The Community Information Service, before directing a client to an agency on a referral basis, will discuss with him the general problem he presents, help him to see the reasons for directing him to a certain agency, determine whether he wishes to go to that agency, and if so, offer to make an appointment for him.
- H. A telephone call will be made to an agency before any client is referred to that agency.
- I. The Community Information office will seek to interpret to agencies the value of reporting back to the Community Information office on each referral. If reports are not received, the Community Information Service will call the agency to which the client was referred.

J. When calls are received from one person on behalf of another person, the latter will be asked whether he wishes the Community Information Service to report back to the referring person or if he would prefer to contact them himself.

K. It is assumed that each agency has a responsibility to maintain their own resource file and to acknowledge in discussion with clients, the gaps in community health and welfare services. In such cases where the client needs services which are obviously not available in our community, referral to the Community Information Service is not recommended (e.g. low cost rental housing, offers of or requests for accommodation in return for room and board).

II. In regard to function and method of handling general community inquiries:

A. Direction in regard to general inquiries should be given in such a way as to give every possible choice in community resources without endorsement or criticism of any particular resource. In general, it should not be necessary for agencies staffed by professional social workers to refer individuals to the Community Information Service except for information in areas other than social work.

B. General interpretation of health and welfare programs is a responsibility of the Community Information Service. Inquiries may be referred to the individual agencies for answers to specific questions about policy.

Information regarding the policy of the Community Chest and Council should only be given at the request of the Executive Director.

C. Complaints regarding a particular client and his relationship with an agency are followed up and referred to the individual agency.

D. Unmet health and welfare needs, as shown by the absence of resources to meet the client's problems, are to be brought to the attention of the Social Planning Committee.

E. It is assumed that public and private social welfare agencies, maintaining intake departments for the purpose of determining eligibility of applicants will continue direct referrals of applicants found eligible for their service to the appropriate agency.

APPENDIX A - 3

FORM: Desk Record of Individual Inquiries
Community Information Service
Community Chest and Council, Vancouver.

~~COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE~~

COMMUNITY CHEST & COUNCIL
VANCOUVER

Date.....

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE

on behalf of

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

REQUEST

.....

.....

.....

REPLY

.....

.....

.....

UNDONE

.....

.....

INDEX

Signed

APPENDIX A - 4

FORM: Face Sheet, requests for financial
assistance, Winter, 1953 - 1954.

Community Information Service

Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver

Family, Resident ...
Family, Transient...

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE

REQUESTS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Unattached, resident...
Unattached transient...

Date

Marital Status

Name of Client
 (surname) (given) S... M... W... Sep... Div....
Spouse (given) (maiden) Children..... Age.....
Address
.....
.....

Referred by

Place of Birth Date of arrival in Vancouver
Religious Affiliation B.C.
..... Canada
Illness or Handicaps N.B.
.....
Family Situation

Actual Request: Emergency Food Payment back rent
Emergency Shelter Payment advance rent
Emerg. Food & Shelter.... Grocery Order
Clothing Transportation to Home () Job()
Furniture Other
Medical Care
.....

Agency Check

General maintainance until Unemployment Insurance received ()
eligibility Soc. Assistance proved ()
Workman's Compensation received ()
D. V. A. benefits received ()

General maintainance with no prospect other benefits ()

Normal Trade or Profession Last time worked at this.....
Registered N.E.S. section N.E.S. number
..... Date to
Eligible Unemployment Ins. Benefits Date Registered Receive
Date last interviewed, N.E.S. General prospects employment
.....
.....

(over)

Veterans: Regimental No. Location papers
Service Length of Service - Canada
Overseas
Pension W.V.A. Monthly Amt.
Interviewed by D.V.A. Liason, N.E.S.
Prospect employment

Community Services already used by client:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Service</u>
.....	Salvation Army	.....	.....	Canadian Legion	.....
.....	C. S. S. D.	.....	.....	Army Benevolent Fund	.....
.....	Ret. Soldiers Club	.....	.....	Red Cross	.....
.....	Central City Mission	.....	.....	St. Vincents Home	.....
.....	First United Church	.....	.....	Church	.....
.....				
.....				
.....				
.....				

Referral Referred to Outcome

Directed
No. positive service

APPENDIX A - 5

Monthly Report Form: M-5 (1951)

Suggested for use COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

CENTRES, Community Chests and Councils

of America, Inc., (see reverse side).

CCC
Form M-5
(1951)

COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CENTERS

Agency.....

Street..... City.....

Month..... Year.....

A—SOURCE OF INQUIRY

Number

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Total inquiries (sum of items 2-11)..... | |
| 2. Health or welfare agencies, governmental and voluntary..... | |
| 3. Business firms and organizations..... | |
| 4. Labor unions | |
| 5. Schools, public and private..... | |
| 6. Government departments, other than health, welfare and schools..... | |
| 7. Churches and religious organizations..... | |
| 8. Veterans' organizations | |
| 9. Civic, fraternal and other organizations..... | |
| 10. Professional, other than agencies, schools and clergy..... | |
| 11. General public (a plus b)..... | |
| a. On behalf of self..... | |
| b. On behalf of others..... | |

B—TYPE OF CONTACT

x x x x

- | | |
|---|--|
| 12. Total inquiries (same as item 1; sum of items 13-15)..... | |
| 13. Inquiries by personal interview..... | |
| 14. Inquiries by telephone..... | |
| 15. Inquiries by letter..... | |

C—TYPE OF INQUIRY

x x x x

- | | |
|---|--|
| 16. Total inquiries (same as item 1; sum of items 17-19)..... | |
| 17. Inquiries for general community or agency information..... | |
| 18. Inquiries for help in offering facilities or services..... | |
| 19. Inquiries for help with specific problems (a plus b)..... | |
| a. Identifying information not recorded..... | |
| b. Identifying information recorded..... | |
| (1) Families or individuals not previously known (included in item 19b) | |

(OVER)

APPENDIX A - 5

Monthly Report Form: M-5 (1951)

Suggested for use COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND REFERRAL
CENTRES, Community Chests and Councils
of America, Inc., (see reverse side).

Back of Form M-5

D—NATURE OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS PRESENTED	Number
20. Total problems presented by inquiries reported in item 19 (sum of items 21-36)	
21. Placement of the aged.....	
22. Child care (outside home).....	
23. Counseling with personal or family problems.....	
24. Health, excluding mental health.....	
25. Mental health	
26. Vocational problems, including employment.....	
27. Financial need	
28. Homemaker	
29. Housing	
30. Legal	
31. Vacation facilities, including camping.....	
32. Recreation, other	
33. Educational	
34. Military service and veterans benefits.....	
35. Government rights and benefits (other than veterans).....	
36. Other problems	
E—DISPOSITION OF SPECIFIC PROBLEMS	x x x x
37. Total (same as item 20; sum of items 38-43).....	
38. Referred or directed to agency (a plus b).....	
a. Definite referral	
b. Direction only	
39. Referred or directed to other resource.....	
40. Information and guidance given—referral unnecessary.....	
41. Needed service not available.....	
42. Inquirer withdrew request or refused service.....	
43. Other disposition	
F—STAFF (part-time workers should be included at the fraction of full time devoted to the service)	x x x x
44. Professional	
45. Clerical	
46. Volunteers	

Reported and approved by.....

Date.....



Please read carefully the instructions for filling out this form.

APPENDIX A - 6

Samples of Resource Listings, Rotary File,
Community Information Service,
Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver.

See Reverse side of Card:

BLIND -

1. Soc. Service - CNIB-1101 W. B'dway
CH. 3111

2. Recreation - as above.

3. Pension - Application - see B.C.
Manual P. 22.
(over)

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE

BLIND - 1101 W. Broadway - CH. 3111

Nat. Dir. Western Canada - (see over)
Capt. M. C. Robinson.

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE

BLIND - 1101 W. Broadway CH. 3111

Miss E. Scott - Social Work Supervisor
(see over)

ROBINSON, Capt. M. C. CH. 3111

National Director, Western Canada
Can. Nat. Institute for the Blind
1101 West Broadway, Van. 9.

SCOTT, Miss Eileen - CH. 3111
Social Work Supervisor, C.N.I.B.
1101 West Broadway.
Vancouver 9.

APPENDIX A - 6

Samples of Resource Listings, Rotary File,
Community Information Service,
Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver.

See Reverse side of Card:

School - B.C. School for the Deaf &
the Blind, 4100 W. 4th - AL.3211
Home - Queen Elizabeth Hall,
5200 Main St., Van. FR.7914
Sight-saving Classes - School Board
Vocational Rehabilitation - See
CNIB file

See cardex on "Blind"
and following card.

See cardex on "Blind"
and previous card.

APPENDIX A - 7

Community Information Service
Statistical Report: April, 1954.

Community Chest and Council of
Greater Vancouver.

COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL OF GREATER VANCOUVER

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE REPORT

April 1 - April 30, 1954.

SOURCE OF INQUIRY

A. ORGANIZATIONS - - - - - 85 calls.

I. Financially Participating Agencies, Community Chest and Council - - - 32 calls.

1. Alexandra Neighbourhood House - 2	9. Returned Soldiers Club - - 6
2. Boy Scouts (Vancouver) - - - - 2	10. Salvation Army - - - - - 2
3. Can.Nat. Inst. for the Blind - 1	11. Van. Boys Club Ass'n - - - 3
4. Disabled Veterans Ass'n - - - - 2	12. Vancouver Clothing Com. - - 1
5. Family Welfare Bureau - - - - - 3	13. Van. Housing Ass'n - - - - 1
6. Girl Guides Council (Van.) - - - 1	14. Y. M. C. A. - - - - - 5
7. Greater Van. Health League - - - 1	15. Y. W. C. A. - - - - - 1
8. Jewish Family Welfare Bureau - 1	

II. Community Chest and Council - - - - - 6 calls.

III. Other Health, Welfare & Recreation Agencies - - - - - 28 calls.

1. B.C.Camping Ass'n - - - - - 4	8. Prov. Psychiatric Services 2
2. Cath. Immigration Service - - - 1	9. Prov. Soc. Welfare Br. - - 5
3. City Soc. Service Dept. - - - - 3	10. St.Pauls Hospital S.S. - - 1
4. Dept. of Veterans Affairs - - - 1	11. Unemployment Ins. Commis.- 1
5. Juvenile & Family Court - - - - 1	12. Vancouver Foundation - - - 2
6. Metropolitan Health Committee - 4	13. Van. General Hospital S.S. 1
7. Narcotic Research Team - - - - 1	14. Youth Counselling Service- 1

IV. Community Groups Other Than Health & Welfare - - - - - 19 calls.

1. Business and Industry - - - - - 7	6. Schools - - - - - 1
2. Camps - - - - - 2	7. Trade Union - - - - - 1
3. Churches - - - - - 3	8. Van. Public Library - - - 1
4. Co-op. Play Groups - - - - - 1	9. Women's Directory - - - - 1
5. Service Clubs - - - - - 2	

B. INDIVIDUALS - - - - - 148 calls.

1. Board & Committee Members - - - 4	6. Social Assistance Recip. - 1
2. Indian (reservation) - - - - 1	7. Volunteers - - - - - 2
3. Lawyers - - - - - 2	8. Working mothers - - - - - 1
4. New Canadians - - - - - 1	9. Unclassified - Identified 63)
5. Student - - - - - 1	- Unidentified 44) 107.
	10. Unemployed Employables - 28

Unemployed Employables:

Families: Resident - -9	Single men & women: Resident - 6
Transient - -4	Transient - -9
<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>

TOTAL INQUIRIES - 233 calls

SUMMARY OF INQUIRIES

I. GENERAL COMMUNITY INFORMATION - - - - - 130 calls

A. Direction to specific Organizations & Individuals:

1. Financially participating agencies C.C.&C.- - - - -	9
2. Voluntary Health Welfare & recreational (not F.P.A.)- - -	10
3. Public Health Agencies- - - - -	2
4. Public Welfare Agencies - - - - -	4
5. Other Government Departments- - - - -	4
6. Professional, business, fraternal & civic organizations -	12
7. Churches - - - - -	3
8. Fund raising campaigns - - - - -	10
9. Hospitals- - - - -	--
10. Educational & Cultural - - - - -	1
11. Out of Province Resources- - - - -	1
12. Camps (Specific)- - - - -	3
13. Individuals- - - - -	7

B. Information re Obtaining:

1. Written Material- - - - -	11
2. Speakers, leaders, etc.- - - - -	5
3. Advice re speeches, essays, etc. - - - - -	--
4. Time and place of meetings- - - - -	2

C. Advice re:

1. Financially based projects and gifts in kind - - - - -	3
2. Seeking or offering volunteer services - - - - -	2

D. Direction re Housing Projects, (named):

1. Old Age Pension, - - - - -	1
2. Families - - - - -	4
3. Agencies - - - - -	1

E. Questions re Agency Function: - - - - - 15

F. Camping Resources (not specified):- - - - - 19

G. Miscellaneous:

1. Instructions for Women's Institute, Fraser Valley in making stuffed toys - - - - -	1
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II. HEALTH:- - - - - 12 calls

1. Agency reporting man with poisoned foot, will not call medical aid.
2. Woman, husband in hospital, no funds. Firm does not co-operate hospital insurance scheme.
3. Camping for girl with rheumatic condition.
4. Hotel Manager reporting elderly guest very ill.
5. Son re nursing home care elderly father.

SUMMARY OF INQUIRIES, cont'd.

Health, cont'd.

6. Woman on behalf sick friend needing home care.
7. Woman re nursing homes available for elderly blind man.
8. Re obtaining wheel chair for paralyzed man.
9. Hospital Worker re obtaining transportation for staff patient to Interior.
10. Man on unemployment insurance seeking low cost treatment for skin condition.
11. Elderly employed man re low cost optometrist services.
12. O.A.P. re payment dentures.

III. EMPLOYMENT:- - - - - 20 calls

Seeking Household Assistance:

1. Family during illness - - - - -1
2. O.A.A.; O.A.P.- - - - -2
3. Working mother - - - - -1

Advice re Employment:

1. Social Worker & recreational worker- - - - -4
2. New Canadians- - - - -4
3. Physically handicapped persons - - - - -2
4. O.A.A.; O.A.P.- - - - -
5. Social Assistance Recipients- - - - -1
6. Nurses- - - - -1
7. Other - - - - -4

IV. FAMILY AND PERSONAL - - - - -36 calls.

A. Marital & Intra Family Problems; - - - - -11 calls.

1. Young man re marriage counselling for fiancée,
2. Wife seeking advice re problem of alcoholic abusive husband.
3. Young married man, 1 child, already supporting mother, has sister & 2 children without funds, arrive to share accommodation 1 bedroom ap t.
4. Gas station proprietor, re customer - wife terminal cancer, daughter 6 hospitalized for hip condition.
5. Pre marital counselling for young brother & bride.
6. Young woman, employed finds relationship parents increasingly difficult.
7. Elderly man, seeking daughter, who is separated from husband, and "in trouble"
8. Worker re legal counsel in marital difficulties, low income families.
9. Business man re counselling resources for married woman in Fraser Valley, alcoholic, 2 teen age children.
10. Woman re family situation, husband formerly highly paid executive unable to maintain family.
11. Pre marital counsel for young Protestant couple.

IV. FAMILY & PERSONAL Cont'd.

B. MENTAL HEALTH: - - - - - 4 calls.

1. Young woman, known to Crease Clinic and client V.G.H.S.S. seeks educational guidance.
2. Man, limited income seeks support in committing wife, now in private hospital to P.M.H. against family opposition.
3. Unemployed man, hallucinations, seeking medical care and maintenance.
4. Woman, married 3 months, living on her savings, husband very religious, refuses to work.

C. CHILD PLACEMENT AND CARE: - - - - - 9 calls.

I. Daily: - - - - - 6 calls

1. Kindergarten child of New Canadian parents Social Area 7.
2. Re friend, working mother on social assistance, has opportunity job if day care available.
3. Working mother, husband epileptic seeking day care 2 children, 3 years and infant.
4. Pre school care, 2 year old Social Area 30(Joyce & Kingsway)
5. Day Placement, child of employed New Canadian Social area I.(West End)
6. Pre school centre for child 6, (social area 8) Nan. & Broadway.

2. Adoption, Foster Homes. - - - - - 3 calls.

1. Mother, boarding home 12 year old son.
2. Shop steward industrial plant re services for 17 year old employee, cannot stay with mother.
3. Husband, wife needs holiday, seeks placement 3 children under 8 years.

3. Homemaker service - - - - - Nil

D. HOUSING - - - - - 9 calls

1. O.A.A.: O.A.P. - - - - - 3 calls.

(a) Rental Housing.

1. Low cost rooms,
2. O.A.P. evicted from friends home, too noisy.
3. Friend wants list low rental housing.

(b) Board or Institutional Care.

1. 78 year old mother, recently arrived city.
2. Business man, board residence, mother.

HOUSING CONT'D.

(c) Homemaker Service.

1. O.A.P. wishes to stay in home.
2. Adults under 65 years.
 1. Low rental housing for 60 year old widow.
 2. Low rental housing in North Vancouver.
 3. Low cost rental housing adult.

E. MISCELLANEOUS:

1. Crippled man on Social Assistance, seeks outside contacts.
2. Recreation for 12 year old boy attending Child Guidance Clinic, Social area 26
3. Camping for girl with physical handicap.

V. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE- - - - - 51 calls

A. Information - re application - - - - - 7 calls

1. O.A.A., O.A.P.- - - - - 4
2. Social Assistance - - - - - 3

B. Requesting Financial Assistance.- - - - - 44 call.

1. O.A.A., O.A.P. - - - - - 1
 1. Dentures - - - - - 1.

2. Unemployed Employables- - - - - 35

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Loan, Gen, Maintenance- 14 | |
| 2. Clothing & repairs --- 7 | 8. Transportation-----2 |
| 3. Emergency Food & Shelter----- 5 | 9. Fuel----- |
| 4. Food----- 3 | 10. Loggers Boots----- |
| 5. Shelter----- | 11. Medical appliance 1 |
| 6. Rent----- 2 | |
| 7. Baggage----- 1 | |

3. Social Assistance Recipients.-3-

1. Widow, child to get food, cheque ready in P.M.
2. Family on special grant want grocery order.
3. Present quarters being torn down; wants rent until social assistance cheque arrives.

4. Miscellaneous- - - - - 5

1. Girl, job Campbell River no fare.
2. Friend seeking financial assistance for retarded girl (13) in Institution.
3. Ward - Supt of Child Welfare, seeking shelter, job& Maintenance.
4. "Bread Man" several people on route cannot pay.
5. Woman on Social Assistance to report neighbour's children hungry.

DISPOSITION OF INQUIRIES

A. FINANCIALLY PARTICIPATING AGENCIES, C.C.& C.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Referred</u>	<u>Directed</u>	<u>Reported Back</u>
1. Family & Child Welfare (Catholic)	1	-	1	-
2. Children's Aid Society	4	2	2	1
3. Family Welfare Bureau	4	2	2	1
4. Foster Day Care Association	2	-	2	-
5. Gordon Neighbourhood House	1	-	1	-
6. Returned Soldier's Club	6	3	3	2
7. Salvation Army	5	1	4	-
8. S. P. C. A.	1	1	-	-
9. Strathcona Day Nursery	1	-	1	-
10. Vancouver Boy Scouts Association	1	-	1	-
11. Vancouver Housing Association	3	-	3	-
12. Victorian Order of Nurses	2	1	1	-
13. Volunteer Bureau	2	-	2	-
14. Vancouver Sailors Home	1	-	1	-
15. Y. M. C. A.	3	1	2	-
16. Y. W. C. A.	2	1	1	1

Totals: 39 12 27 5

B. COMMUNITY CHEST AND COUNCIL

12 4 8 -

C. PUBLIC AGENCIES:

1. Vancouver:

(a) City Social Service Dept.	23	5	18	1
(b) Metropolitan Health Committee	1	-	1	-
(c) School Board	3	-	3	-
(d) Public Library	1	1	-	1

2. Province (Dept. of Health & Welfare):

(a) Old Age Pension Board	3	1	2	1
(b) Prov. Psychiatric Service	1	1	-	1
(c) Social Welfare Branches	2	1	1	1
(d) Prov. Health Dept.	1	-	1	1

Other Departments:

(a) Extension Dept., U.B.C.	3	1	2	-
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3. Federal:

(a) Citizenship & Immigration	4	2	2	-
(b) Employment Service	5	2	3	1
(c) Dept. of Veterans Affairs	4	1	3	-
(d) Dept. of Indian Affairs	1	1	-	-

Totals: 52 16 36 7

DISPOSITION OF INQUIRIES cont'd:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Referred</u>	<u>Directed</u>	<u>Reported</u>
<u>D. OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:</u>				
1. Association of Retarded Children	1	-	1	-
2. Board of Trade	1	1	-	1
3. Better Business Bureau	1	-	1	-
4. B. C. Camping Association	9	-	9	-
5. B. C. Cancer Society	1	1	-	1
6. Business	3	-	3	-
7. Canadian Red Cross Society	3	1	2	1
8. Cedar Cottage Youth Club	1	-	1	-
9. Canadian Folk Society	1	-	1	1
10. Community Arts Council	2	1	1	1
11. Churches	6	2	4	2
12. Catholic Information Service	2	2	-	2
13. Co-op. Play Group Association	1	-	1	-
14. Canadian Ass'n Social Workers	1	-	1	-
15. Children's Hospital	1	1	-	1
16. Canadian Legion (Prov. Command)	1	-	1	-
17. Jr. League Thrift Shop	1	1	-	1
18. Private Physician	2	-	2	-
19. St. Paul's Hosp. Social Service Dept.	2	2	-	1
20. Vancouver Foundation	1	-	1	-
21. Van. General Hospital (Soc. Service)	3	1	2	1
22. Venture Club	1	1	-	1
23. Women's Service Club	1	1	-	1
24. Youth Salvage	1	-	1	-

47 15 32 16

E. Given Information from Files
(Specific Resources)

96

F. Could Not Assist

17

G. Not Completed

7

SUMMARYI. SOURCE OF INQUIRY:

A. <u>From Organizations</u>	85 calls.
1. Financially Participating Agencies, C.C. & C. (15 agencies)	32 calls.
2. Community Chest & Council (1 agency)	6 "
3. Other Health, Welfare & Recreation Organizations (14 organizations)	28 "
4. Community Groups other than Health & Welfare (9 organizations)	19 "
B. <u>From Individuals</u>	148 calls.
<u>Total</u>	<u>233 calls</u>

II. NATURE OF INQUIRIES:

1. General Information	130
2. Health	12
3. Employment	20
4. Family & personal	36
5. Financial Assistance	51
	<u>249 Calls</u>

III. DISPOSITION OF INQUIRIES.

1. Financially participating Agencies, C.C. & C. (16 agencies)	39
2. Community Chest & Council (1 agency)	12
3. Public Agencies (to 13 depts)	52
4. Other Community Organizations (24 organizations)	47
5. Given information from files	96
6. Could not assist	17
7. Not completed	7
Total Number of Organizations inquiring	39
Total Number of Organizations to which referral or direction given	54
Total incoming telephone calls	211
Total number of letters	11
Total inquiries in person	128
Average inquiries per day	14.9

APPENDIX B

TABLE I. UNIDENTIFIED CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU *
GREAT BRITAIN. TWELVE MONTH PERIOD 1946-1947

SUMMARY OF INQUIRIES

According "to Nature of Inquiry"

Family and personal problems	3,108
Housing and Rent queries	1,917
Supplies and Rationing, e. g. applications for dockets and permits for furniture and clothing lost through fire or burglary or by laundries and cleaners	1,647
Service Questions, e. g. enquiries by serving men and women or their families, including enquiries about allowances	963
Queries arising from ill-health	875
Matrimonial problems	790
Legal questions	774
Social Insurance enquiries	854
War damage questions	444
Miscellaneous questions relating to Income Tax, Education and Employment and requests for local information	1,787
	<hr/>
	13,159

* Cited Council of Social Services, Advising the Citizen,
p. 38. London, 1950.

APPENDIX B

TABLE 2. COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, VANCOUVER
INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS AS SOURCES
OF INQUIRY. OCTOBER 1, 1953 to MAY 31,
1954.

Source	Number	Percentage of Total
Individuals	1452	70.7
Organizations	601	29.3
TOTAL	2053	100.0

APPENDIX B

TABLE 3. COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, VANCOUVER.
INQUIRIES OF ORGANIZATIONAL SOURCE BY TYPE
OF ORGANIZATION. OCTOBER 1, 1953 to MAY
31, 1954.

Type of Organization	Number	Percentage of Total
1. Financially Participating Agency, Community Chest and Council. (1)	178	29.6
2. Community Chest and Council	70	11.6
3. Government Departments ⁽²⁾	131	21.6
4. Health Welfare and Recreation Agencies, non-Chest members	74	12.5
5. Other Community Organizations. (3)	148	24.7
	601	100

1 As of January 1, 1953. Not including 11 agencies joining United Appeal, Community Chest and Council, January, 1955.

2 Including departments other than Health and Welfare, e.g. Mining, Agriculture, Police.

3 Includes service clubs, business firms, trade unions, churches, etc.

APPENDIX B

TABLE 4. COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, VANCOUVER.
INDIVIDUALS CLASSIFIED IN ORDER OF INCIDENCE
AS SOURCES OF INQUIRY. OCTOBER 1, 1953 to
MAY 31, 1954

Total		Number	Percentage of Total
Classification		1452	100
1.	Unclassified	877	53.6
2.	Unemployed employables	285	12.7
3.	Old Age Security and Pension Recipients	76	5.2
4.	New Canadians	53	3.9
5.	Social Assistance Recip- ients .	17	1.2
6.	Social Workers (non-agency)	15	1.0
7.	Others *	129	22.4
	a) Board and Committee members		
	b) Business persons		
	c) Clergymen (non-parish)		
	d) Deserted wives		
	e) Doctors		
	f) Ex prisoners		
	g) European correspondents		
	h) Indians (reserve)		
	i) Landlords		
	j) Lawyers		
	k) Physically handicapped persons		
	l) Students		
	m) Teachers		
	n) Tourists		
	o) Unmarried Mothers		
	p) Veterans (per se)		
	q) Volunteers		
	r) Working mothers		
		1452	100

* All classifications under "others" showed less than
15 inquiries or less than 1% of total.

APPENDIX B

TABLE 5. COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, VANCOUVER
NATURE OF INQUIRIES. OCTOBER 1, 1953 to
MAY 31, 1954

Month	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Total	% of Total	% of Total
Total	318	266	259	163	270	334	249	403	2262	100%	100
Classifi- cation											
General Informa- tion	126	112	136	70	134	156	130	294	1158	51.2	51.2
Health	29	17	8	11	11	20	12	9	117	5.1)	)48.8
Employ- ment	26	47	10	15	32	31	20	20	201	8.4)	
Family Personal	70	38	24	25	39	47	36	53	332	15.2)	
Financial Assist- ance	67	52	81	42	54	80	51	27	454	20.1)	

APPENDIX B

TABLE 6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, VANCOUVER
DISPOSAL OF INQUIRIES, BY REFERRAL AND
DIRECTION TO FIVE TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS
AND INDIVIDUALS

Type of Organization	Referred	% of Total	Direction	% of Total	Referred and Directed	% of Total
1. Fin. Part. Agencies Community Chest & Council	218	15.0	213	14.7	431	29.7
2. Community Chest & Council	53	3.6	53	3.6	106	7.2
3. Government Services and departments	246	17.1	306	21.2	552	38.3
4. Non-chest health, recreation, welfare services	82	5.6	97	6.7	179	12.3
5. Other community organizations	66	7.6	103	7.2	169	11.8
6. Individuals			10	.7	10	.7
TOTAL	665	45.9	782	54.1	1147	100.0

APPENDIX B

TABLE 7. COMMUNITY INFORMATION SERVICE, VANCOUVER
FIVE TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONS AS SOURCES OF
INQUIRY AND POINTS OF DISPOSITION, OCTOBER
1953 to MAY 31, 1954.

Types of Organization	Source of Inquiry		Point of Disposal	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1. Fin. Part. Agencies Com. Chest & Council	178	29.6	431	29.7
2. Community Chest & Council	70	11.6	106	7.2
3. Governmental services & departments	131	21.6	552	38.3
4. Non-Chest health, welfare, recreation orgs.	74	12.5	179	12.3
5. Other community organizations	148	24.7	169 +10	11.8
TOTAL	601	100%	1447*	100%

* Ten persons were directed to the homes or businesses of individual citizens.

APPENDIX C

Community Information Service, Vancouver.

LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

forwarded to twelve organizations
and a compilation of replies to
questionnaire received from eight*
organizations, September, 1954.

- * City Social Service Department.
Dunsmuir House, Salvation Army.
Family Welfare Bureau.
Metropolitan Health Committee.
National Employment Service.
Returned Soldiers Club.
Social Welfare Branch, B. C. (Vancouver office).
Young Womens Christian Association.

September 9th, 1954.

Mr. J. I. Chambers,
Administrator,
City Social Service Department,

Dear Mr. Chambers:

As a student in the 1954 Summer Session, School of Social Work, University of British Columbia, I am endeavouring to complete a thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Work, on the subject "The Community Information Service, Community Chest and Council of Greater Vancouver, 1953 - 1954."

After consulting with Professor William Dixon, and with his approval, I am writing to request the co-operation of the City Social Service Department of Vancouver in this study.

The concluding chapter is to include an evaluation of the program of the Community Information Service for the period October 1, 1953, to May 31, 1954, the eight month period during which a record of each inquiry has been kept. The two criteria to be applied in this evaluation are:

1. the degree to which the Community Information Service has been utilized to advantage to the general public; and by organized groups in the community.

2. the degree to which the Community Information Service has merited acceptance as a legitimate setting for social work services by the organized health and welfare agencies and public departments in Greater Vancouver and the surrounding area.

During the eight month period cited above, the records of the Community Information Service indicate that 58 persons were referred and 87 persons directed to the City Social Service Department. During the same period, the City Social Service Department was the acknowledged source of 24 inquiries directed to the Community Information Service office.

The term "Referral" is used in this study when the problem presented by an individual involved a telephone call or letter or "chit" to an agency or department.

The term "Direction" is used when an inquirer was told how he might himself contact the services he appeared to require.

When inquirers ask for the name, address or telephone number of a specific agency, department or community service, this is recorded as "Given Information Files."

In reviewing the small body of professional literature available on the subject of Information Centres, it would appear that the answers to the five questions listed on the appended sheet might be pertinent in any agency evaluation of the Community Information Service.

The questions are appended as suggestions only. They need not be used as the basis of agency replies.

If your agency would prefer to base their reply on an analysis of actual cases referred or directed from the Community Information Service, I would be glad to call at your office and check these referrals with a member of your staff.

Identical copies of this letter and the enclosed questionnaire are being forwarded to the following agencies: Department of Health and Welfare (Social Welfare Branch), Catholic Family and Child Welfare Bureau, Returned Soldiers' Club, Family Welfare Bureau, Salvation Army (Dunsmuir House), Young Women's Christian Association, Young Men's Christian Association, Children's Aid Society, Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Metropolitan Health Committee.

A similar letter without the enclosed questionnaire is being sent to the Vancouver office of the National Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance Commission.

The list of agencies replying to this request will be appended to the study but the source of any particular comment will not be acknowledged.

This is a student assignment, unrelated to the proposed review of the program of the Community Information Service to be conducted in the Fall of 1954 under the Social Planning Committee, Community Chest and Council:

I am very much aware of the work involved in responding to such a request, and, only the need, under difficult circumstances, to achieve some degree of objectivity prompts me to seek your co-operation.

I would be most grateful for any help you or members of your staff may be able to give me in completing this study.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) Donalda E. McRae.

COPY OF LETTER

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. In terms of the purpose and function of your agency, have the individuals referred from the Community Information Service been persons whom your intake department would accept normally for exploration of their situation or for services?
2. Has this experience at or with the Community Information Service aided or impeded persons referred in utilizing to advantage the services of your agency?
3. To what extent are the individuals referred from the Community Information Service persons who probably would have sought the services of your agency directly, had the Community Information Service not been in operation?
4. Has your agency found the information resources of the Community Information Service useful? Has the information given been accurate and focussed on your inquiry?
5. The twelve month period of experiment in the Community Information Service being concluded, do you see a need for the continuation of this project as part of the central administrative structure of the Community Chest and Council?

If the answer is "yes or "no", please give reasons.
If it is "Yes, with certain modifications" please give reasons and describe suggested changes in administration, procedure and professional practice.

QUESTION 1

In terms of the purpose and function of your agency, have the individuals referred from the Community Information Service been persons whom your intake department would accept normally for exploration of their situation or for services?

Agency A. - Yes.

Agency B. - Yes.

Agency C. - They probably would have and because of the inquiry into the circumstances into each case we would say that all the cases referred would have been accepted by our agency for exploration.

Agency D. - Yes; agreement that referrals were appropriate and very well done.

Agency E. - Yes.

Agency F. - Yes.

Agency G. - Yes, they have.

Agency H. - This agency is the basic service of its kind in Vancouver, and would explore the possibility of offering services to persons such as those referred to it by the Community Information Service.

- - - - -

QUESTION 2

Has this experience at or with the Community Information Service aided or impeded persons referred in utilizing to advantage the services of your agency?

Agency A. - It is difficult to answer this question. I expect eventually most of these people would have found their way to this agency. Possibly contacts with the Community Information Service aided their acceptance.

Agency B. - In most cases it gave them more confidence in using the services of - - -

- Agency C. - Aided. When the people referred arrived at this agency they had an understanding of what to expect, as the situation had been clarified by the Community Information Service.
- Agency D. - Opinion was that appropriate referrals from Community Information Service have aided people in using the services of this agency.
- Agency E. - Most certainly it has aided them.
- Agency F. - No doubt it has aided them as it put them in touch quickly and directly with needed assistance.
- Agency G. - The experience with the Community Information Service has aided persons to use the services.
- Agency H. - The Community Information Service helped them find their way to this agency. It would appear that they did not have special difficulties, because of their experience at the Community Information Service, in using the services of this agency.

- - - - -

QUESTION 3

To what extent are the individuals referred from the Community Information Service persons who probably would have sought the services of your agency directly, had the Community Information Service not been in operation?

- Agency A. - It is expected that eventually most of these people would have found their way to this agency.
- Agency B. - Although most individuals who recognize their need for general services would probably come to our service eventually. In regard to our special services, it has been found that through exploration at the Community Information Service office, persons who might profit from these services have been directed to them.
- Agency C. - I think that a fair proportion of them would have sought our services directly. As an international organization the - - - - - is well known.

- Agency D. - The individuals would have undoubtedly found their way to our agency but as the Community Information Service was in operation a great deal of needless time was eliminated and the individual did not have to travel from agency to agency, but came direct to us.
- Agency E. - Generally speaking most people would have found their way to the - - - - - but it is noted that during the period of greatest unemployment several people did seem to know about the Community Information Service and went there first.
- Agency F. - To some extent, but certainly some of them would not have found us unless by way of the "grapevine" after a period of time.
- Agency G. - We think approximately 50% of people coming would not have come directly.
- Agency H. - This agency has operated in the community for years. Its function and services are well known. Persons wishing to use these services would have arrived at the agency on their own initiative.
- - - - -

QUESTION 4

Has your agency found the information resources of the Community Information Service useful? Has the information given been accurate and focussed on your inquiry?

- Agency A. - A check of the extent of use of the Community Information Service by members of this department is not maintained.
- Agency B. - Yes, very definitely - made our work easier.
- Agency C. - In situations where help was requested, information given has been accurate and appropriate (mentions responsibility of agency to develop and maintain own resource files and states inquiries from this agency have not been numerous).
- Agency D. - Yes, it has been helpful to have this service available so we can refer people directly to the proper source from information provided by the Community Information Service.
- Agency E. - This particular branch (of a multiple service) has not called the Community Information Service for information.

- Agency F. - Very useful. We consider the information given to us has been very accurate and focussed on our inquiry.
- Agency G. - Our agency has used the Community Information Service a great deal as we have many inquiries for this service and have benefited from the accurate information received from the Community Information Service.
- Agency H. - Because of the comprehensive nature of the services offered in this agency and the fact that it is staffed by social workers it should not generally be necessary to call on the information services of another agency or project. However, when such calls have been made the information given has been accurate and helpful.
- - - - -

QUESTION 5

The twelve month period of experiment in the Community Information Service being concluded, do you see a need for the continuation of this project as part of the central administrative structure of the Community Chest and Council?

If the answer is "yes" or "no" please give reasons. If it is "yes" with certain modifications please give reasons and describe suggested changes in administration, procedure and professional practice.

- Agency A. - Yes. The Community Information Service must be of help to a great many individuals in the city. I have never felt it was designed to be of particular use to agencies but rather for groups and individuals in the community.
- Agency B. - Yes, the Community Information Service has filled a long felt need in Vancouver where people felt that in regard to welfare services they often got what they termed "the run around". In the case of a non-social work agency like ours, a poor direction, from one office to a social work agency, is frustrating to the person seeking the service. We believe that this is one of the most interesting developments in the Community Chest and Council, but feel that it could do with much more advertising.

- Agency C. - Our organization has appreciated the Community Information Service, and we sincerely hope it will be continued.
- Agency D. - While it is felt the Community Information Service has been of value, the Directors did not feel competent, on the basis of the small number of referrals and requests for information to make any definite statements.
- Agency E. - Yes, the Community Information Service has been a most useful agency and is serving a definite purpose in the community.
- Agency F. - I think the service of your project is of great value. In our city we have many fine social agencies but there must be a large number of people who have little or no knowledge of services available. At the Community Information Service the client is fully advised of the resources in the community which can help him.
- Agency G. - Yes, as such a service enables our -----, -----, and ----- departments to refer questions to Community Information Service for correct information and direction and thus helps them to better carry out the function for which they are set up.
- Agency H. - It would appear that the general information service available to the public through the Community Information Service office is of value, particularly in maintaining a resource file which gives accurate information regarding points of contact and lists of resources in special fields. There would be only a minimum use of the service by agencies manned by professional social workers such as ours. In terms of efficiency and economy within the Community Chest and Council itself, such a service might well continue on the basis that the existence of the Community Information Service frees the members of the professional staff Community Chest and Council, from onerous and time-consuming interviews and telephone calls, and permits them to carry on their function as social workers in a community organization setting.

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