

Reviews of Recordings

The Problem of Terminal Pain. Recording by DR CICELY SAUNDERS, M.A., M.B., B.S. The College Medical Recording Service and Sound Library.

Dr Cicely Saunders gives a personal account of her practice in the terminal care of patients with malignant disease. By means of tape recorded interviews with patients, and the use of colour transparencies, she builds up a clear picture of the valuable work that is being done in St Joseph's Hospice, Hackney, and manages to convey to the listener, the peaceful yet cheerful atmosphere which prevails there. The various problems of the patients—pain, which is frequently the main physical burden of the illness, nausea, vomiting, bowel disturbances, dyspnoea, choking, anxiety, depression, weariness, mental confusion and insomnia—are reviewed. She stresses the value of careful assessment of these symptoms and of the patients' reactions to them prior to therapy. Adequate time for unhurried interviews between doctor and patient is essential to gain the latter's confidence. The various available symptomatic remedies are discussed in relation to each symptom and the doctor is urged to adopt a positive approach to therapy by adequate, regular, and timely administration of drugs. The aim should always be to keep the patient symptom-free and at the same time mentally alert. The judicious use of alcohol is mentioned.

Doctors, whether practising in the hospital or in the community, are at sometime or another faced with the problem of caring for patients with malignant incurable disease and Dr Saunders, on this tape, provides them with real practical help in the handling of such patients.

Many doctors will want to have a note of the drugs and combination of drugs which are recommended and will greatly appreciate that lists of references are available on request.

Some Practical Problems in Epilepsy. Recording by Dr E. C. O. JEWESBURY. The College Medical Recording Service and Sound Library.

This is a well-recorded tape and throughout Dr Jewesbury speaks clearly and interestingly and makes this subject live. The talk begins by dealing with the problem in its entirety and he shows that about a quarter of a million or 4 per 1,000 of the population in England and Wales suffer from this condition. It is one of the commonest neurological problems and accounts for about 10 per cent of all patients referred to neurologists. It is pointed out that "there are as many different types of epilepsy at there are sites of discharging lesions". Dr Jewesbury goes on to deal with the diagnosis in detail and gives practical advice for the general practitioner. The second half of this double recorded tape deals with the problems of epilepsy in motor driving; the problems of epilepsy in marriage and the possibility of heredity. The final part of this talk deals with the use of drugs in epilepsy. Altogether this is an excellent talk and one that can be recommended wholeheartedly to all general practitioners.