
1954 article about Gaston Negro Hospital

PERSONNEL CHANGES ANNOUNCED

Gaston Negro Hospital Gets New Superintendent Thursday

THE GASTONIA (N.C.) GAZETTE

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The chairman of the board of trustees at the Gaston County Negro Hospital confirmed last night that the hospital will have a new superintendent effective Thursday.

She is Miss Betty Faye Connor of Gastonia, who has been serving as night supervisor at Gaston Memorial Hospital for some time. Miss Connor will be directly responsible to the board of trustees.

Board Chairman Frank A. Young disclosed that Mrs. Robert C. (Ellen) Simpson, superintendent for the past 16 years, has resigned, also effective Thursday, July 1.

Leaving at the same time as Mrs. Simpson is Howard A. Schrum of Dallas, who has served as the hospital administrator since 1950.

CHANGING SYSTEM

In confirming the personnel changes, Mr. Young said:

"The board of trustees feels that we should change from the present administrative form of hospital operation to the superintendent form contemplated.

"We believe that the new system will give us a better-integrated and more efficient operation.

"The trustees, however, want to commend both Mrs. Simpson and Mr. Schrum for doing a splendid job. Both are to be highly commended.

"Due to the fact that administration of the hospital will be under the direction of Miss Connor, we feel that the job now being done by Mr. Schrum can be handled by an experienced bookkeeper. His replacement is not intended to reflect upon his work.

"On the other hand, the trustees offered Mrs. Simpson a chance to stay on as head nurse, with less responsibility and less work. She chose not to stay. We regret this because she has done an outstanding job for the Negro people in her 16 years at the hospital. We are sorry to lose her."

Mrs. Simpson began her work at the hospital in 1938, being "loaned" for a month from Garrison General Hospital. Seeing a greater need for her services at the Negro hospital, she stayed on for 16 years.

MAY ADD NURSES

Chairman Young pointed out that the new superintendent, Miss Connor, will make any additions in nurse personnel she feels is necessary. There are only two registered nurses employed at the hospital at the present time. In addition to the superintendent. It is a 35 bed hospital. It is believed the present nurse's pay of \$135 a month will be increased.

Mr. Young said that the average daily number of admissions has been climbing steadily in the past 60 days. Where it was averaging between 18 and 20, he said, it now hovers around 25 daily and, in times, all 35 of the beds are full.

Rates now being charged are \$5 a day, room and board, in a ward and \$6 a day in a private room. Mr. Young pointed out that these are pre-war charges. He stated that if there is any change contemplated in the rates the announcement will come from the new superintendent.

COMMITTEE NAMED

Replying to criticism that the Negroes do not have any "say" in the operation of the hospital. Mr. Young said that the trustees had recently appointed an advisory committee from the Negro population.

"We have also," he said, "consulted with members of their race relative to our plans for the future at the hospital. We believe we are embarked on a program which will give the Negro race additional and more efficient hospital services."

Other members of the board are Fred L. Smyre, Jr., M.V. Whitesides, Ralph A. Dickson, Dan Buckner, C.P. Nanney, Houston Matthews, Verne Shive and Frank Griffin.

Mrs. Simpson stated that she has no plans for the immediate future, other than to "take a good rest for a couple of months." Mr. Schrum has not revealed his plans.