

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS NEWSLETTER:

P.O. BOX 2468, CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS 61801

DECEMBER, 1978

ACLU PLANS FORUM ON HOSPITAL PATIENTS RIGHTS

A community forum addressing Hospital Patients Rights will be held on Monday, December 11, at 8:00 P.M., in Wisegarver Lounge of the University Place Christian Church at the corner of Springfield and Wright Streets in Champaign. The Champaign County Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, which is sponsoring the forum, decided on the topic after a survey of its 500 members revealed patients rights as the leading concern. Panelists will be Ronald Aldrich, President, Mercy Hospital, Richard Witham, Attorney at Law, Art Leonard, M.D., University of Illinois College of Medicine, and Greg Siedor, Consumer Advocate. Come with questions and encourage others to attend.

CONSUMER TASK FORCE TO BE FORMED

Under a recently awarded grant from the Community Services Administration, CCHCC will organize a Consumer Task Force to investigate and address many of the barriers facing low-income residents seeking quality health care. Since CCHCC was formed, the question of access to health care has been raised again and again at our meetings and community forums. The barriers facing low-income residents can be compounded by such factors as rising costs, acceptance of Medicaid by local doctors and lack of transportation. In addition to the Task Force, an Advisory Committee comprised of various agencies and organizations that focus on low-income issues will be formed to provide technical assistance and advise. If you are interested in participating on the Task Force or represent an agency that would like to sit on the Advisory Committee, please contact Mike Doyle, 344-8896.

"INFAC" CALLS FOR BOYCOTT

At the CCHCC general meeting held on November 28, a representative of the Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFAC) spoke of the health problems related to the increased use of baby bottles and powdered formulas in underdeveloped countries. According to Diane Jeffers, Secretary of the local INFAC chapter, the babies in underdeveloped countries who use infant formulas "are more susceptible to gastrointestinal infections, malnutrition, and death because of factors such as lack of refrigeration and impure water supplies." Jeffers noted that much of the increase is a result of "intensive corporate advertising campaigns" and deceptive promotional practices. She urged CCHCC members and others to boycott all Nestle' products. The Swiss-based corporation is the largest infant formula distributor in the Third World and has ignored requests to change some of their promotional techniques. For more information contact Diane Jeffers, 367-1331.

COMMUNITY FORUMS TO CONTINUE AFTER HOLIDAYS

After three successful community forums this past fall, the CCHCC Community Education Committee has started planning a series of forums to begin after the Holiday season. According to committee member Linda Holmes, no dates or topics have been finalized, although a number of suggestions have been received. The forums held this past fall dealt with topics such as The Attitudinal and Architectural Barriers Facing The Handicapped, Hospital Expansion, and Health Insurance. If you have any suggestions for upcoming forums or would like to participate in the planning, please call either Margie Checkoway at 344-5727 or Linda Holmes at 384-7290.

WHY GET INVOLVED?

Much of the increase in rising health care costs is attributable to waste, inefficiency, and lack of effective planning. Researchers have documented an excess of hospital beds, overproduction of medical equipment, and unnecessary construction of health facilities. The U.S. has nearly a million general hospital beds, a quarter of which sit empty on an average day. Each hospital bed costs about \$70,000 to build and another \$20,000 annually maintain, even when empty. Yet the hospital bed overrun continues. In addition, hospitals compete with one another for expensive high technology equipment - such as \$500,000 CAT scanners - which may be either unnecessary or already available nearby. Unnecessary expansion and unnecessary equipment only fuel the rising costs of health care. Medical bills are now the number one cause of bankruptcy in the U.S., yet comparatively Americans are a less healthy population. Twenty years ago, this country ranked eighth in infant mortality among the 20 leading industrial nations, it has since dropped to 15th. But consumers have reason to be hopeful. The federal government has recently established over 200 Health System Agencies (HSA) throughout the country giving consumers an opportunity to review the need for expansion in their community. Now with the power to do something about it, consumers are beginning to realize that what seems to be true of gas-guzzling cars may also hold true for hospital expansion. That is, the biggest may not be the best, but it is definitely the most expensive.

CARLE ANNOUNCES HUGE EXPANSION

Hospital expansion is an important issue in our own community. Carle hospital officials have announced plans for an \$8,824,600 expansion project, including construction of laboratory facilities, new physician and administrative offices, two radiosopic-fluorographic devices, and a linear accelerator. Charles Dawley, hospital administrator, does not want the project reviewed by the public "because of the time that will be lost during the process and the cost of preparing a full application." The Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board has recently ruled that the expansion project should be reviewed, however, according to Dawley, the hospital is trying to have that decision reversed. But why would an institution that claims to serve the public do everything in its power to avoid public review? (The Morning Courier, 12/1/78)

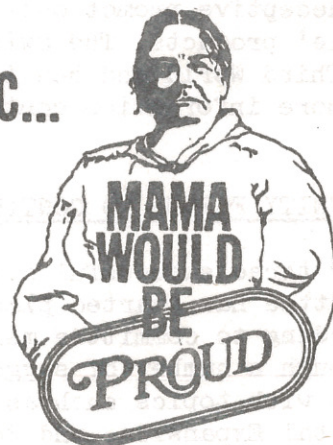
MERCY EXPANSION TO GO BEFORE PUBLIC

A public hearing on Mercy Hospital's \$14 million expansion proposal will be held on Wednesday, January 3, at 7:00 P.M., in the Urbana Free Public Library Auditorium, 201 S. Race, Urbana. The hearing, conducted by the East Central Illinois HSA, is the first in a series of steps the proposal must go through before a final decision is made by the HSA.

CCHCC CONDUCTS MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Champaign County Health Care Consumers has begun its first annual membership drive and is offering dinner for two at the MAMA WOULD BE PROUD RESTAURANT to one of the lucky new members. Having watched the CCHCC mailing list skyrocket from 200 subscribers last fall to over 900 this year, the CCHCC Steering Committee decided it was time to recruit some dues-paying members. The membership drive, which originally began as a small contest among Steering Committee members, is already a smashing success. In fact, the response has been so overwhelming that organizers of the drive have tossed out their earlier projections and are now optimistic that CCHCC Membership could triple by the December 14 deadline. Join the crowd and send in your coupon today. (See inside cover for more information).

JOIN
CCHCC...



Win!

DINNER FOR TWO

Win!

Here's your chance to win a dinner for two at one of Champaign-Urbana's newest restaurants, MAMA WOULD BE PROUD. To be eligible you only need to join the Champaign County Health Care Consumers during our first membership drive.

WHO CAN JOIN CCHCC?

Everyone is welcome to join - consumers and providers, individuals and organizations.

HOW DO YOU WIN?

There are two ways for you to win. The first winner will be drawn from all new CCHCC members who join before the December 14 deadline. The second winner will be the CCHCC member to recruit the most new members. Any and all ties will be broken by drawing lots.

WHEN WILL THE WINNERS BE ANNOUNCED?

Both winners will be chosen at the December 14 CCHCC Steering Committee meeting. The winners will be notified by phone and need not be present.

If you aren't a CCHCC member, send in your coupon today. Then join the rest of us in encouraging friends and relatives, neighbors and local businesses, unions and social service agencies, civic organizations and elected officials to support the Champaign County Health Care Consumers in our efforts to improve local health care delivery to all residents through public involvement. This is your chance to take an active role in one of the strongest consumer organizations in our area and possibly win an evening out for two.

**The dinners have been donated courtesy of the MAMA WOULD BE PROUD RESTAURANT.*

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS
P.O. BOX 2468
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS 61820

I WANT TO JOIN CCHCC AND RECIEVE
THE CCHCC NEWSLETTER:



\$1-10 MEMBERSHIP, DEPENDING ON
YOUR ABILITY TO PAY. PLEASE
PAY AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.

MY CHECK FOR \$_____ IS ENCLOSED.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

TELEPHONE # _____

*Health care is too
important a matter of
public concern to be
left solely to those
who provide it.*

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CARE CONSUMERS
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I want to join CCHCC and
receive the CCHCC NEWSLETTER:

☐ \$1-10 membership, depending on
your ability to pay. Please
pay as much as you can.

My Check for \$_____ is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Tel. No. _____