

The 'F. Book'

Sir,

Dr Kuenssberg's 'F. Book' draws attention to the overlapping nature of households and family units, and of the practices which serve them. His system requires a secretary, and needs the cards (representing each member of a particular household) to be kept together.

His cards cannot use their edges for recording much information, and there is danger of disorder when their positions are changed, as when a daughter marries, or a grandparent moves in. And while the systems of personal records are a great effort to compile, they need much less to maintain them.

A card index system in this practice is brought up to date every quarter. The cards are 6.4" x 4" (Copeland-Chatterton, Paramount series) and kept in 'University' flip top boxes, males in one set and females in the other, in age order; this age-sex method is more flexible than the use of a ledger.

Each patient in the practice has a card, therefore, which has abstracted his name, address and date of birth from the official record in the same way as the 'F. Book'. But now the senior member of each family in the practice is chosen as the 'Patient Related' for that family. By 'family' is meant all the patients related to that patient by blood or legally, and also those of doubtful or no relationship who belong to this senior member's household, or to a household related to him (or her). '? Rel' refers to this distant relationship.

A list is then built up on the back of each senior member's family card of all the patients included in his family (and who will therefore have his name at the base of their card). These patients cards are then clipped at the appropriate relationship letter (figure (a)), but they are not collected together as in the 'F. Book'. This avoids duplication. 'Blood Parent' is a convention used to distinguish patients with a similar relationship, and means the parent(s) of the patient, or the 'patient related', (or both), who is related by blood to both, where this is possible; in any other case it is left blank.

When a senior member dies or leaves the practice, his family card is retained in another box for past patients, but is still used as the reference point for his family, unless a particular line of research requires otherwise.

Figures 1 and 2 show the fictitious cards of a patient in the practice and his wife, who although not on the list, is of importance because of her blood relationship as well as legal one. The details of other members of the family are included on their respective cards in the same way, and a list of their names is made on the back of the senior member's card, in this case Mr Abbot.

The cards need a separate alphabetical index of patients, either a card index or a ledger. This can be used to record the date of acceptance, the date of the council stamp, and the date of actual departure of each patient. There is often a member of a family without an official record and this takes care of that. The birthdays are recorded in the fourth column.

Finally, the system can include a card for each member of a particular

household who is not a patient in the practice, but who has an effect on the health of the patients who are. In this case 'Known Dr' must be filled in and 'K' rather than 'T' clipped. This information is particularly important when assessing for example the incidence of stress disorders in relation to the proximity of mental illness, and provides an ideal field for co-operation between practices. Mrs Abbot might be neurotic, and her husband have psoriasis.

When the punched information needs to be altered a new card is made out, but this is seldom.

Orpington, Kent

M. J. JAMESON.

PARAMOUNT REED, TRADE MARK G.S.C. 10470 J												FAMILY CARD												N.J.J.I. BORN 10:1:20	
Z	DEAD	SURNAME: ABBOT																		ALIVE	A				
Y	G'CHILD	FORENAMES: Bernard Charles																		BLOOD REL.	B				
X	REL	ADDRESS:- 45, Forest Green, Keston																		COUSIN	C				
NO	SAME ADDRESS ?	BLOOD PARENT:																		SAME NAME ?	YES				
YES	ADDRESS ?	SPOUSE: Laura Mary (née OWEN)																		NAME ?	NO				
U	UNCLE AUNT	" BORN: 12:3:21 DIED:									MARRIED: 7:6:42									FEMALE	F				
T	THIS PRACTICE	SOCIAL HISTORY:																		PAST HISTORY:	G'PARENT	G			
S	SIBLING	Committer. Civil Servant. 2 sons. 1 dau. wife is 1st cousin (g.s.)																		Appx. out 1942 RAF. Rj.h. g'n. Ory. Hosp. Apr. 47.	HUSBAND WIFE	H			
NO	EVER ANY CHILDREN?																			EVER MARRIED ?	YES				
YES	CHILDREN?																			NO	NO				
P	PARENT																			KNOWN DR.	K				
O	OFFSPRING	RELIGION:																		LEGAL REL.	L				
N	NEPHEW NIECE	KNOWN DR.:									PATIENT RELATED: SELF									MALE	M				
DIED																									

Figure 1.

PARAMOUNT REED, TRADE MARK G.S.C. 10470 J												FAMILY CARD												N.J.J.I. BORN 12:3:21	
Z	DEAD	SURNAME: ABBOT																		ALIVE	A				
Y	G'CHILD	FORENAMES: Laura Mary (née OWEN)																		BLOOD REL.	B				
X	REL	ADDRESS:- 45, Forest Green, Keston.																		COUSIN	C				
NO	SAME ADDRESS ?	BLOOD PARENT: Mary Jean OWEN (née SMITH)																		SAME NAME ?	YES				
YES	ADDRESS ?	SPOUSE: Bernard Charles																		NAME ?	NO				
U	UNCLE AUNT	" BORN: 10:1:20 DIED:									MARRIED: 7:6:42.									FEMALE	F				
T	THIS PRACTICE	SOCIAL HISTORY:																		PAST HISTORY:	G'PARENT	G			
S	SIBLING	Mrs M.J. OWEN is sister of Mr. Abbot's mother. 2 sons. 1 dau.																		B.P. 160/100 since birth of dau. 1948. (no symptoms).	HUSBAND WIFE	H			
NO	EVER ANY CHILDREN?																			EVER MARRIED ?	YES				
YES	CHILDREN?																			NO	NO				
P	PARENT																			KNOWN DR.	K				
O	OFFSPRING	RELIGION:																		LEGAL REL.	L				
N	NEPHEW NIECE	KNOWN DR.: DR. BROWN									PATIENT RELATED: Husband.									MALE	M				
DIED																									

Figure 2.