

MEDICAL REFORM GROUP OF ONTARIO

TORONTO CHAPTER

DECEMBER, 1979.

Upcoming Events

<u>ECONOMICS</u> Working Group	Jan. 3, 1980 7:30 PM (Thursday)	473 Palmerston Blvd. Contact: John Frank 536-3781
<u>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</u> Working Group	Jan. 14 7:30 PM (Monday)	S. Riverdale Community Health Centre 126 Pape Contact: Trevor Hancock 278-4308
<u>HEALTH IN THE THIRD WORLD</u> Working Group	Jan. 16 7:30 PM (Wednesday)	Jesuit Centre 947 Queen Street E. Contact: Michael Stogre 469-1123 (W) 766-3091 (H)
<u>TORONTO CHAPTER</u> Regional Meeting	Jan. 22 7:30 PM (Tuesday)	S. Riverdale Community Health Centre 126 Pape

Date to be determined:

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH Seminar with the Toronto Occupational
Health Resource Committee (TOHRC)

Two Sundays in early February

*****Further details on all these events
in this mailing*****

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP UP TO DATE?

An important reminder that membership fees for the Medical
Reform Group are due by January 1, 1980.

Graduate Physicians\$25
Medical Students\$15
Others \$5

Because of the cost and time involved in sending out these
mailings, we will have to discontinue mailings to those who have
not paid fees, or at least indicated a continuing interest in the
MRG by returning a membership form.

If you have not completed a membership form, one is enclosed
(yellow). Please complete it and return it to the Medical Reform
Group at our box office address.

P.O. BOX 366, STATION 'J', TORONTO, ONTARIO M4J 4Y8

About the Working Groups

At the regional meeting on December 1, it was decided that for now we should focus on three working groups in the Toronto chapter. Though interest has been expressed in other areas- women and health, medical education, and community health centres, to name a few,- it was felt that our active membership was too small to take on any more at this stage.

HOWEVER, if there are members who wish to pursue areas other than those listed below, and who would be willing to undertake the task of co-ordinating a working group, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please bring your ideas to the next regional meeting.

ECONOMICS WORKING GROUP

The oldest of the working groups, the economics working group remains the busiest in the Medical Reform Group.

Since the MRG's first entrance into the arena of public debate, the need to develop positions on questions of the economics of health care has become acute. For now, a number of interrelated issues and activities will be subsumed under this group, for example:

- proposals for alternate methods of physician payment and health care delivery. The merits of differing methods of payment- salary, fee-for-service, capitation, a combination of the above,- will be investigated with a view to developing proposals for our organization to adopt.
- a brief to the Hall Commission. Under the direction of Justice Emmett Hall, the Commission will be touring Canada listening to submissions on the problems and future shape of the health care system. The Commission will be in Toronto the week of March 11, and the MRG has been invited to submit a brief. This will be an important public forum for us to air our concerns, and the CMA and provincial medical associations have already indicated their intentions to submit briefs outlining their positions.
- development of strategy and other policy on issues arising from the MRG's public involvement in the area of economic issues.

The economics working group will be looking at issues that are of great immediate importance to us, and we hope to involve as many members as possible in its activities.

MEETING: Thursday, January 3 1930 hrs
473 Palmerston Blvd.

Contact: John Frank 536-3781

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The environmental health working group will look at ill health as a byproduct of technology. Recent estimates by the World Health Organization, for example, have suggested that 75 to 85% of all cancers may be linked to environmental agents: the medical and social implications are profound.

Though the issues and priorities will be defined by the group on the basis of interest, some issues that might be considered include:

- nuclear energy
- chemicals in the environment: eg. PCB's, acid rain, lead
- antibiotics in the food chain
- psychosocial factors in health

If the first wave of epidemics wrought by the Industrial Revolution was the result of infectious diseases- the plague, TB, diphtheria, etc.-, the second wave is chronic disease resulting from the byproducts of technology. This group will study these, and propose responses.

MEETING: Monday, January 14 1930 hrs
S. Riverdale Community Health Centre
126 Pape

Contact: Trevor Hancock 278-4308

HEALTH IN THE THIRD WORLD

This working group will focus on the health needs and problems of the third world, as well as the health care models that have evolved in response to these needs.

The priorities of the group will be determined by its members, but areas that might be covered include:

- organizing campaigns for supplies and personnel to be sent to areas where the need for medical aid is great- recently, for example, to Nicaragua and Southeast Asia- in conjunction with other organizations
- the torture of physicians and the role of physicians in torture. There is mounting evidence, for example, that physicians in Pakistan are performing amputations on convicted criminals. Also support for the work of the Canadian Medical Group of Amnesty International.
- native health, in conjunction with native organizations, including discussion of participation in programs in the north

In addition, members of the MRG have spent time in various third world countries, and it is hoped that they can be enticed to share their experiences.

MEETING: Wednesday, January 16 1930 hrs
Jesuit Centre,
947 Queen Street E.

Contact: Michael Stogre 766-3091 (H)
469-1123 (W)

AN APPEAL

The Medical Reform Group is at a critical juncture in its existence. Response to our activities, disparaging editorials in the Medical Post notwithstanding, has been highly supportive, and we have attracted the sympathetic attention of the public, trade unions, a cross-section of politicians, and an increasing number of physicians.

We now have a mailing list of close to 300 names, and frequent requests for speaking engagements, etc. And we are faced with a need to expand the focus of our activities to other issues in health care. Put simply, the demands on our Group are reaching the point of overwhelming the available time of our small core of active members, and we need help.

More importantly, the very nature of the Medical Reform Group is being defined by the positions we develop and the activities we undertake now. This is our group, and we want it to reflect the views of all its members.

Please try to play as active a role as possible in the MRG: we need the active support of as many members as possible if we are to succeed.

NEWSLETTER

Contributions to the provincial newsletter- short articles, ideas, drawings, etc- would be welcomed; also needed are volunteers to assist with typing, layout, mailings, etc. We hope to have the next issue completed by the end of January.

If interested, or willing to help, please contact John Marshall (921-7087) or come to the next regional meeting.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SEMINAR

At present there is no occupational health working group in Toronto, though one exists in Hamilton. However, the Toronto Occupational Health Resource Committee, a group composed of both trade unionists and professionals, has agreed to put on a seminar for the MRG in late January or early February. The seminar will be held on two Sunday afternoons, two weeks apart, and will be an introduction to the scope and issues of occupational health and safety. Full details will be included in the next mailing in early January.

TORONTO CHAPTER MEETING

The next meeting of the Toronto chapter will be on Tuesday, January 22, at 1930 hrs in the South Riverdale Community Health Centre, 126 Pape.

The agenda, which will be detailed in the next mailing, will include an update on the working groups and a discussion of the future plans and priorities of the Toronto chapter.

*** WISHING YOU A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON, AND THE BEST FOR

THE NEW DECADE ***