

J. Letters

May 18, 1965

Leon J. Epstein, M. D.
University of California Medical Center
401 Parnassus Avenue
San Francisco, California 94122

Dear Leon:

I am writing in answer to your letter concerning Dr. Murray Pollack's stepson in the panorama of treatment facilities in New York. Hillside Hospital has one of the best reputations for the management of adolescent problems such as you describe in your letter. The only hurdle at Hillside when I was there in 1962 was the fact that the treatment program was in the hands of psychiatric residents and that often many weeks went by before senior staff men evaluated patients. In the hands of the residents, treatment was prolonged and probably less effective than in the hands of experienced workers. During the past few months Dr. S. Nichtern was appointed to direct this part of the program. He is a sophisticated worker and while I have no personal experience with the present program at Hillside I would be more optimistic about recommending such a boy now than I would have in 1962.

To admit a patient would require a telephone call from his physician to Mr. Abe Luri (212 Fi 3-7800) and a letter describing his medical condition.

Up to the time I left, there were no private patients at Hillside, and all patients were treated by the full time staff. Admissions are on a first come first serve basis, and if found suitable by the admitting physician, are admitted independent of their ability to pay. Payment for services is an arrangement made by the social worker with the family and for those patients who are indigent, payment is provided through various charities or city agencies. Since these funds fluctuate in the amount available there were times of the year when no free patients could be admitted, and other times when every suitable free patient seen in the admitting unit was admitted. With these comments in mind, I would suggest that the referring physician recommend admission and leave the nature of payment to be solved by an agreement between the Social Work Department and Dr. Pollack.

The cost of care at Hillside did range up to \$300 a month. I would suspect that the full payment is now higher but even at its full rate in 1962 it was significantly less than Chestnut Lodge, Menninger or Stockbridge.

Parentetically the medical service at Hillside is unusually sophisticated in the management of the medical aspects of psychiatric patients and if physical illness is a possible factor, I would be very much inclined to have the boy seen by their internist Dr. Arnold G. Blumberg.

Dr. Epstein

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(Even if the boy is not admitted to Hillside, I believe you might find Dr. Blumberg's opinion valuable in evaluating the medical aspects of this problem.) Dr. Blumberg's office is in Manhasset, Long Island.

My best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M. D.
Professor of Psychiatry

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