
**Galway County
Board of Health and Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital &
Dispensaries Committee
Archive Collection**

1922 - 1942

GC6/

A Descriptive List Prepared by Galway County Council Archives





GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944

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Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944

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Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



ACCESS TO THE COLLECTION

AS MUCH OF THE INFORMATION IN THIS COLLECTION CLEARLY IDENTIFIES FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS RESEARCHERS ARE REQUESTED, IN ORDER TO PREVENT POSSIBLE DISTRESS OR EMBARRASSMENT TO NEAR DESCENDANTS, TO SIGN A DISCLOSURE FORM PRIOR TO CONSULTING THE RECORDS VERIFYING A WILLINGNESS NOT TO CITE SPECIFIC NAMES IN RESEARCH WORK. A SIMPLE DISCLOSURE FORM IS REQUIRED TO GAIN ACCESS TO ITEMS IN THE MATEIRAL NOT LISTED AS CLOSED. HOWEVER, WERE ACCESS IS REQUIRED TO THE WHOLE COLLECTION, INCLUDING MATERIAL LISTED AS CLOSED A MORE DETAILED DISCLOSURE FORM IS REQUIRED.



Galway County Council Archives Service

Disclosure Form for Access to Sensitive Information

As a condition of being given access to

County Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance Committees

I hereby undertake that I will not publish or communicate to any other person the names or other particulars of persons named in these records in respect of any matter of a private or personally sensitive nature, with particular regard to mental illness, disease, or any allegation or suggestion concerning offences of any description.

Nor will I use any photographic reproductions in any publications, and shall only retain any such photographs for personal research reference purposes, and undertake to destroy same as soon as possible following completion of research.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

The Data Protection Commissioner defines sensitive data as information relating to:

- Physical or mental health
- Racial origin
- Political opinions
- Religious or other beliefs
- Sexual life
- Criminal convictions
- Alleged commission of offence
- Trade Union membership



Galway County Council Archive Service

Disclosure Form for Access to Confidential Information

A closure period of one hundred years applies to this material containing personal or sensitive material identifying individuals and their personal circumstances.

Level One:

Level One access shall in principle entitle the applicant to view such parts of the entire collection of the archived materials as are necessary and relevant to their research project irrespective of the contents of the materials or the date on which they were created. Before a request for Level One access will be entertained the applicant must satisfy at a minimum the following criteria: -

- A. The Applicant must be engaged in clinical, historical or sociological academic research to post graduate degree level which must be described in detail by the applicant.
- B. An application must be accompanied by two independent referees from a health authority, academic institution or Government agency both of which must recommend the applicants request for access.
- C. The application must be accompanied by a character reference from the applicant's academic supervisor recommending the request for Level One access.
- D. The qualifications of the applicant in the area of research being undertaken and a detailed summary of the substantial and authoritative research already carried out and published by the applicant must be provided.
- E. The applicant shall permit the Lender to independently verify the references provided and to make such verbal or written enquiries as it considers necessary to establish the authenticity of the access request.
- F. The researcher must undertake in writing not to disclose verbally and orally or otherwise any detail which may identify individual patients, their families, relatives or next of kin or any other identifying information in printed or oral format.
- G. The Lender reserves at all times the right to inspect, prior to publication, the applicant's research for the purposes of verifying the absence of any confidential information and the Lender shall be entitled to require the applicant to delete any references to what it considers to be confidential information.
- H. The applicant must undertake in writing not to use the information gathered from accessing the materials for any purpose other than those stated in the original application.
- I. It is hereby expressly agreed that the Lender shall be entitled to add to or vary any of the above conditions when sanctioning a request for Level One access.



Level Two: Level Two access shall in principle entitle the applicant to view only the following materials from the archived collection: -

- (i) Any archived material which the Lender considers contains confidential information pertaining to individual patients, their treatments, diagnosis or medical records shall not be made available until a period of one hundred and twenty years has lapsed from date of creation of the last document or entry containing such personal or sensitive information.
- (ii) All documentation pertaining to managers' orders, wages, salary records and personnel records shall not be made available until the period of 50 years has lapsed from the date of creation of the last entry of any such record. A closure period of 30 years shall apply for administration files and anything containing a staff name other than the aforementioned items.
- (iii) All remaining documentation shall be made available following a period of thirty years from the date of creation of the last entry.
- (iv) Before a request for Level Two access will be entertained the applicant must satisfy at a minimum the following criteria: -

- A. The applicant must be engaged in general historical, genealogical or sociological research of an academic nature which must be described in detail by the applicant.
- B. The applicant must undertake in writing not to disclose to any third parties any information or detail which may identify or assist in the identification of individual patients, their families, relatives, next of kin or other identifying information in printed or oral format.
- C. The Lender reserves at all times the right to inspect, prior to publication, the applicant's research for the purposes of verifying the absence of any confidential information and the Lender shall be entitled to require the applicant to delete any references to what it considers to be confidential information.
- D. The applicant must undertake in writing not to use the information gathered from accessing the materials for any purpose other than that stated in the original applicant.
- E. It is hereby expressly agreed that the Lender shall be entitled to add to or vary any of the above conditions when sanctioning a request for Level Two access.

Level Three: Level Three access shall entitle the applicant to view only non-personal information as identified in category (iii) of Level Two access. Before a request for Level Three access will be entertained the applicant must satisfy at a minimum the following criteria: -

- A. The applicant must undertake in writing not to disclose to any third parties any information or detail which may identify or assist in the identification of individual patients, their families, relatives, next of kin or other identifying information in printed or oral format.
- B. The applicant must undertake in writing not to use the information gathered from accessing the materials for any purpose other than that stated in the original applicant.
- C. It is hereby expressly agreed that the Lender shall be entitled to add to or vary any of the above conditions when sanctioning a request for Level Two access.
- D. The Lender confirms it's willingness to facilitate research and access to the archived materials subject to the conditions outlined herein.



IT IS HEREBY AGREED THAT:

1. Subject to the terms and conditions set out below the Galway County Council Archives Service, (hereinafter called the Archives) hereby agrees to allow access to the archival material described in the attached inventory (hereinafter called 'the material') to the researcher whose details are provided below.
2. Researchers are provided access to the entire collection subject to signing the attached declaration undertaking not to refer to individuals in this category by name, or make reference to information allowing an individual to be identified, in their work.
3. A written application for access should be completed by the researcher and should include detailed information regarding the nature and purpose of their research
4. The application for access should be accompanied by the details of two nominees, not related to the researcher, who undertake to vouch for the researcher.
4. Research will be carried out under the supervision of the Archivist.
5. The researcher will comply with Copyright legislation.
6. Copies of the material will not be made available by the researcher to other parties without the express written permission of the Archive
7. A draft of any publication produced by the researcher using this confidential material should be submitted to the Archive to allow a check to ensure no individual mentioned in the material can be identified in the publication.

SIGNED: _____ Date: _____
Signed for and on behalf of the Archive

Researcher

Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS):

Address (IN BLOCK CAPITALS): _____

Contact Number: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____



Nominee

Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS):

Address (IN BLOCK CAPITALS):

Position _____

Contact Number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Nominee

Name (IN BLOCK CAPITALS):

Address (IN BLOCK CAPITALS):

Position _____

Contact Number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Galway County Council Archive Service Declaration by Researcher

I _____ hereby apply for full access to the archives listed in the attached list. I am aware of the access restrictions to material containing personal information, which is less than one hundred years old.

I undertake not to make reference by name to any individual, or to supply information from this category of material, which would allow an individual to be identified in any published work, or in any public discussions.

Name : _____

Address : _____

Telephone No. (Home): _____ Telephone No. (Mobile): _____

Description of Research Topic: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPLICATION APPROVED BY _____

FOR AND ON BEHALF GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHIVES SERVICE

SIGNATURE : _____

DATE : _____



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



INTRODUCTION

This collection of archives consists of the Minutes of the Hospital & Dispensaries Committee (1922-1942), a Register of Patients Admitted and Discharged from the hospital (1930-1932), and an abstract of accounts (1922-1942).

The collection has been assigned the archival code of GC6/.

Much of the material in this collection is closed. This is due to the sensitive nature of its content, where, for instance, the name and ailments of patients is referred to, the name of unmarried mothers and the putative father is given, and the identity of certified lunatics is also revealed.

Boards of Health and Public Assistance

When the Poor Law was abolished in 1921 the workhouses were replaced by a system of county homes for the old and infirm, and hospitals for the sick. Outdoor relief was replaced by home assistance. The Unions' remaining functions were transferred to county councils.

To replace the existing workhouses and poor law union system Galway County Council resolved to have one central hospital in Galway with ambulances, and have one central home for the old and infirm in Tuam or Loughrea. Children were to be sent to an Institution for which one of the workhouse hospitals was used. Unmarried mothers were to be dealt with according to whether they were '*first offenders*' or '*older offenders*', with the former sent to the same institution as the children and the latter sent to the Magdalen Asylum 'according to the number of 'offences'¹.

When Rural District Councils were dissolved in October 1925 under Section 8, Sub-section (2), (3), and (4) of the Local Government Act of that year their functions were also transferred to the county councils and administered through Boards of Health and Public Assistance. These Boards, made up of ten people, were established by County Councils in countries outside of Dublin under the Local Government Act, 1925, to operate as executive committees of the county council to perform health, sanitary and housing functions, assuming responsibility for administering measures against infectious diseases

¹ Galway County Council Minutes, G01/3, p308 (available on microfilm at Galway County Council, Archives)



and tuberculosis, sanitary arrangements, labourers' cottages schemes, water and sewerage schemes and a number of schemes including blind welfare, boarded out children, and school medical services in small towns and villages. They also had responsibility for the supervision of county homes, hospitals and dispensaries, and home assistance.

The Boards of Health and Public Assistance survived until August 1942 when the administration of public assistance and sanitary matters came under the direct control of the County Councils acting through the new county managers under the County Management Act of 1940.

Summary History of County Galway Hospital and Dispensaries Committee

(Bord um Slainte agus Fortinne Pubibhil Condae na Gaillimhe, Coisde Ospideal agus Ioclann)

WHAT FOLLOWS IS A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE COMMITTEE AS EXTRACTED FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF ITS MEETINGS.

The Hospital and Dispensaries Committee took charge of the working of the Central Hospital and the Dispensary and Nursing services, paying all salaries, rents and connected running expenses except capital expenditure in 1922². *'The Hospital's Committee shall be entrusted with the management of and working of the Galway Central Hospital, and of any subsidiary Hospital which may at any time be provided under the Scheme, and also of the Dispensary and Nursing services of the county Galway'*³ The Committee reported to the County Board of Health and to the Department of Local Government (GC6/1).

The Committee held its first meeting on 25th February 1922. It was initially to consist of 16 members, the Chairman of each Rural District Council in the county and six nominated members. The quorum was four. The Committee was re-appointed at each Annual Meeting of the County Council. In March 1922 the County Council ordered that each of its members could also be a member of the Hospital Committee. The Committee also elected its own various sub-committees, such as the Finance Committee, Galway Hospital Committee, Ladies Committee, and Nursing Committee.

Meetings were originally held twice a month and later from circa 1932 monthly.

It took charge of the running of the Central Hospital (formerly the Poor Law Union (Workhouse) Hospital) and, until its closure in 1924, of the Galway Hospital in Prospect Hill. The latter was used exclusively for surgical cases. As all the former workhouses were to be closed in 1921 any remaining patients were transferred to the Central Hospital. However, despite orders to close all

² County Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance archive collection, GC5/2, f90

³ *ibid.*, GC5/1, f128



such hospitals, the Tuam Union Hospital was still open in May. The Committee advised the persons responsible that it could not accept liability for any debts incurred (GC6/1, 13 May, p5). The 10 Poor Law Union accounts were closed and the Galway Hospital account was merged with the Central Hospital account. All hospital charges were from then 'county-at-large' charges.

With regard to the management of the dispensaries the Committee liaised with the Local Government Department in issuing approvals for the appointment of the Medical Officers and mid-wives in each area. They sanctioned leaves of absence and vacation substitutions. For instance in the Laurencetown Dispensary in 1927 it sanctioned '*...the employment of Dr. J. Burke as vacation substitute for Dr Fair at £5.5.0 per week*' (GC6/6/, 14 September 1927, p17).

They also sanctioned any improvements to the dispensary premises, and the acquisition of medical supplies and equipment. The minutes occasionally mention the name of the person certified by the Medical Officers as a lunatic, and thus such records are closed.

For a period of time Commissioners were appointed to perform the duties of the Co. Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance and its associated Committees. The minutes reveal that Commissioner Enri Seosam MacGuaigin presided over the meeting of 10 December 1930; no other members are recorded as being present at this meeting. MacGuaigin appointed himself and the members of the Medical Staff attached to the Central Hospital as its Visiting Committee, (GC6/9, 10 December 1930, p1). Later Patrick Bartley also acted as commissioner for a period from *circa* 1932 – 1934.

At one of its first Special Meetings, the Committee recommended on 2nd March the allocation of specific duties to the various officers, such as the Clerk, Matron, and Porter. It also recommended the review of several salaries (GC6/1, 4 March 1922, pp6-7). It also set about reviewing the Nursing Scheme in the Hospital. In 1922 there was six nursing staff, one of which acted as Ambulance nurse in the General Wards of the Central Hospital. The Medical Staff recommended nine nurses. It considered two trained and two probation nurses were required for the Fever Hospital. In addition it considered '*...necessary precautions are not taken in this Hospital, to prevent Nurses and Maids contracting Fever, and the Charge Nurse and House Physicians should see that such precautions are strictly carried out in future*' (GC6/1, 13 May 1922, p3). The Medical Staff also recommended 2 nurses, one for day and one for night, together with a temporary nurse for the Maternity Wards. In the Prospect Hill Surgical wards there were 11 nurses. This was considered to be an adequate number (GC6/1, 13 May 1922 pp2-3). In June the Nursing Committee recommended that the number in Prospect Hill be supplemented by 3 additional nurses. In addition a member of the committee observed on a visit to the Hospital that '*Trays on which food was conveyed to patients not wiped clean, potatoes only partly washed, Bread cut in thick slices, and generally food served up to patients in a very uninviting manner*' (GC6/1, 24 June, 1922).

Later in 1939 when the nursing staff was comprised of the Matron, 4 assistants to the Matron, 20 nurses, 6 of whom acted in nursing administrative capacities, and 31 probationer nurses, the



Department of Local Government and Public Health approved a request from the Committee to increase the number of staff, so that there could be 23 nurses, and 40 probationers along with the matron, her assistants, and the 6 administrative nurses; thereby increasing the number of nursing staff to 57 (GC66/18, p18 March 1939, p4).

In 1922 much of the former Poor Law Union complex of buildings, including part of the hospital was occupied by the IRA, though it vacated the hospital in February 1922. In March the Committee was informed that the British Military had caused some damage to the hospital (GC6/1, 4 March 1922, p5).

Also in March 1922 there was discussion about the proposal to provide a surgical hospital. Initially it was proposed to convert part of the former Workhouse premises into a surgical unit but the Medical staff felt it was unsuitable for the purpose, and '*...that no reconstruction work can render the body of the House fit for such a Hospital*' (GC6/1, 8 March 1922, p1).

In early 1922 there was a dispute with the milk contractors, who were demanding 2 shilling per gallon. The hospital was only willing to pay 1/7½ per gallon. The hospital was left on occasion without a supply of milk and the Committee called for arbitration on the matter. However, the Secretary of the Milk Vendors Association, Mr Small, advised a special Committee meeting that '*...milk would not be delivered at less than price demanded, 2/- per gallon, and refused to leave the matter for settlement to the Trade Department of Local Government, or any other Independent Arbitration Court.*' During the dispute the Hospital purchased its milk supply in Dublin for ¼ per gallon and had it transported by rail to Galway (GC6/1, 22 April 1922). By 29th April the Secretary informed the Committee that the Vendors had agreed to accept 1/7½ per gallon.

An outbreak of Typhus Fever in Recess, Connemara was reported to the Committee in June 1922. Twenty-five people, patients and contacts, were moved '*...across the mountains*' to the Fever Hospital, and disinfecting was carried out. Following this immediate action no further cases of the fever were reported (GC6/1, 24 June 1922, p10).

In mid-1922, with the unrest following the War of Independence and the commencement of the Civil War Galway County Council had funding difficulties. As a result the County Board of Health advised the Committee of the '*...absolute necessity of limiting expenditure...as the Co. Council, owing to unavoidable delay in issuing Rate Warrants, have been obliged to withhold remittances from Public Bodies in the County*'. To which the Committee responded '*...that by far the greater part of this Committee's expenditure is in connection with transferred services, over which they have no control, such as Salaries of Dispensary Medical Officers, Midwives, Porters, Rents of Dispensaries, etc. As regards supplies to Hospitals – they are sufficiently curtailed, for the reason that some articles of food cannot be got for any price. The patients are without Butter for over a week*' (GC6/1, 8 July 1922).



In April 1922 the Committee set a scale of charges for paying patients in the Central Hospital, including the Maternity and Fever wards at 3 shillings per day. The charges in the Prospect Hill Branch were set at 4 shillings per day in the General Wards, and 6 shillings in the private wards (GC6/1, 1 April 1922). By 1933 when the fees had already been considerably increased there was a further increase for private patients for major operations, which increased the cost from £2.2.0 to £5.5.0, and for minor operations from £1.1.0 to £2.2.0 (GH6/12, 12 April 1933, p3).

In mid-1922 Dr Michael Davitt took up duty as House Surgeon and almost immediately made recommendations for changes, such as a change in the dietary scale for patients and hours of duty for nursing staff. In September 1922 he wrote to the Committee in support of the necessity of appointing an Apothecary to the Central Hospital. He wrote '*...the Dispenser's assistant, who is not officially appointed and who is not trained or qualified in any way, is practically the only one who makes up the routine mixtures for the wards. I need not elaborate on the dangers of having an uneducated man in charge of so important a department as the Pharmacy of a large Hospital*'. He continued stating '*I dislike heartily the making of complaints, and in Ireland today there is an undoubted tendency to sacrifice efficiency in favour of persons. If we are to have a Hospital we can be proud of we must not allow any consideration to deter us from seeing that the patients get the very best treatment we can afford to give them*' (GC6/1, 14 October 1922, p3).

In mid-1923 the Committee recommended that the Board of Health & Public Assistance obtain a loan to have improvement works, estimated at £7,1,3.2.0, carried out to the hospital in order '*...to have the entire Institution put into order as a complete and up to date Hospital, allocate apartments for nurses, etc*' (11 August 1923, p3).

In 1923 the average weekly cost of a patient in the Central Hospital was £0.13.3.

For the six months between April and September 1923 the Institution treated 1,391 patients, including 32 births. 7,358 patients were treated in the hospital during a three year period, from 1924- August 1927, with 249 births recorded (GHC6/6/, 14 September 1927, p8). In 1928 there were 3,250 admissions (GC6/8, 13 November 1929).

In February 1924 Dr Davitt reported to the Board on a proposed scheme for the new Maternity Hospital, suggesting that it be worked on a similar system to that which operates in the Coombe Hospital. '*This means that there will be a Master or General Supervisor of all work in the maternity department. Under him will be an assistant master and under him a house surgeon. The house surgeon will be called to any case that the nurses may not be able to deal with; if it proves too difficult for him the assistant master, or finally, the master must be sent for. The assistance master will therefore attend to the work while the master acts as consultant, but retains control of all maternity matters. The Staff suggest that the position of assistant master could be filled by some doctor having obstetric experience and who is residing in Galway. A small salary of £100 to £150 would be sufficient. The master's position would be an honorary one...*' (GC6/3, 9 February, 1924, p3). The duties of the assistant obstetrician are laid out in the minutes of 8 March 1924.



In March 1924 the Local Government Department suggested that small Districts Hospitals, with accommodation for Fever and Maternity patients, be established in the eastern and western parts of the county. However, the Hospital's Committee opposed this suggestion on a number of grounds. For instance it pointed out that Clifden in the extreme west and Ballinasloe in the east of the county have direct railway communication with Galway, a hospital in Connemara, to meet Fever requirements alone, would require 30 or 40 beds, with observation Wards, and further stated that *'A patient can be conveyed by motor ambulance from any part of the County to Galway in 3 hours, whilst in the pre-amalgamation days patients often had to spend 4, 6, and 8 hours in a horse drawn vehicle, with iron shods tyres, yet evidently there were no complaints'*. The Committee pointed out that if District Hospitals were established in any particular part of the county, other districts would *'be justly entitled to similar facilities.... The fact that over 2,300 patients were treated in Central and Branch Hospitals during the past year clearly proves that people have no hesitation in coming to Galway. No doubt, when the Mains Building is fully equipped and opened for the reception of patients, this number will increase by 50%'* (GC6/3, 8 March 1924, pp13-14).

A report from a sub-committee on arrangements for the transfer of patients and so forth to the new hospital is included in the minutes for September 1924 (GC6/3). Recommendations relating to the Branch Hospital state that the gatekeeper is to be given notice as her service would no longer be required. *'The Clerk, Mr Forde, to be transferred to the Secretary's Department as an Assistant; all the nurses, the Assistant Matron and such of the attendants, cooks etc as may be required also to be transferred to the Central Hospital....The House Surgeon of the Branch Hospital also to be transferred to the Central Hospital'* (GC6/3, 13 September 1934, p19). By December 1924 the new hospital was occupied by patients from the male side of the old Medical Hospital and the Surgical cases from the Branch Hospital.

In late 1925 due to financial difficulties the Board of Health ordered that expenditure be reduced by 10%, including official's salaries for a period of three months. The Committee therefore ordered that the Secretary was authorised to *'...deduct 10% from all salaries and allowances such as rents, etc, payable after 1st January, in respect of quarter ended 31st instant for a period of 3 months. Wages paid weekly or monthly are to be similarly dealt with during ensuing quarter'*, (GH6/4, 9 December 1925, pp1-2). The Committee submitted in December 1925 its estimate of expenses to the Board of Health for the ensuing year, requesting £40,820. The Hospital was then recommended to ensure it collected all monies due from paying patients, *'It is observed that the Committee are in the habit at each meeting of remitting, either wholly or in part, accounts due for maintenance and treatment in the Institution. The order of the Committee requiring patients to pay £2.2.0 on admission, and afterwards weekly in advance should be strictly adhered to in future'* (GC6/4, 9 December 1925, p3).

There was of course some dispute regarding the deduction in salaries and wages. Such as *'The Secretary of the Irish Nurses' Union reported that several of their members have directed attention*



to the fact that their salaries were reduced by 10% for the past quarter. The Minister for Local Government has informed the Union that he has not sanctioned any such deduction and therefore it ought not have been put into effect. The Union has been given to understand that an increased overdraft has been sanctioned by the Government, and the Union must therefore request that the amount deducted from the nurses' salaries be refunded to them at the earliest possible moment' (GC6/5, 10 March, 1926, pp1-2).

Overcrowding was an almost constant problem in the Hospital, which by the late 1920s could accommodate 210 patients. In February 1935 the *'Matron reported that the Institution is very much overcrowded. There are 20 patients lying on stretchers on the floor'* (GC6/14, 20 February, 1935, p12). Again in 1938 she reported that there were 283 patients in the medical and surgical departments and only 216 beds, *'...that patients who have not beds are usually put in with other patients or put on stretchers or mattresses on the floor; that this is very hard on the patients and also on the staff'*. As a result the Board ordered that all non-urgent cases or those unlikely to benefit from Hospital treatment be discharged and that the *'...attention of the Local Government Department be directed to the urgent necessity of arranging for the erection of the new Central Hospital as soon as possible'* (GC6/17, 21 May 1935, p13).

In 1938 the Local Government Department noted *'...from returns received that the number of patients in the medical and surgical portions of the Central Hospital on the 31st July last was 235, while the buildings are intended to provide accommodation for 216 beds. The Minister would be glad to have suggestions from the Committee to deal with the overcrowding in the Hospital pending the building of the proposed new Hospital'*. Following on from which the Committee ordered the Medical Staff to discharge all patients other than acute cases, and the Committee *'...are of the opinion that many patients who are kept in the Hospital could be treated in their own homes by the District Medical Officers'* (GC6/17, 17 September 1938, p12). In addition, the hospital was understaffed, with only 20 trained nurses and 31 probationers employed at that time.

In 1940 members of the County Galway Division of the Irish Medical Union protested *'...against any insinuation that the overcrowding in the Galway Central Hospital is due to any failure in their duties on the part of Dispensary Medical Officers. The improvements in Hospital methods of diagnosis and treatment have been numerous in recent years, and conscientious practitioners feel that these should be made available for their patients when called for'* (GC6/19, 17 February 1940, p22).

Due to the sensitive nature of the information contained in the minutes, generally between 1925 – 1934, which record the identity of unmarried mothers and the putative fathers these volumes are closed. These minutes record the actual name of the individuals involved. The other minutes generally only record initials. In February 1925 the Matron was ordered to ensure *'...that all patients are to be admitted under their proper names and a list submitted to each meeting, showing*



names and addresses of unmarried mothers admitted to the Institution' (GC6/4, 11 February 1925, p11).

In May 1926 the Committee submitted a recommendation to the Board of Health that it '*...arrange for the establishment of a Maternity ward in the County Home for unmarried mothers, as the admission of this class of patients to the Maternity Department of the Central Hospital tends to prevent respectable patients from seeking admission thereto*' (GC6/5, 12 May 1926, p2).

In 1927 the Committee passed the following resolution, '*That considering the prevalence of sexual immorality, as evidenced by the number of illegitimate births at the Maternity Hospital in Galway, this Committee deplore the departure from the old Gaelic traditions of purity, caused, in our opinion by the lessening of parental control, and the lack of proper supervision on the occasion of dances and other entertainments of a similar nature, and we therefore most respectfully suggest to the Hierarchy of this County, to appeal to the people, through the Clergy, for a return to the old Gaelic customs, under which such scandals were practically unknown*' (GC6/6, 15 June 1927, pp5-6).

Up until the mid-1930s the Matron usually reported on the number of unmarried mothers admitted each month, followed by details relating to attempts to recoup the costs from the putative fathers. In 1928 there is some discussion relating to the manner in which this is done, where the solicitor raised '*...preliminary point that the plaintiffs should not have been the Board of Health but the Homes & Home Assistance and the Hospital & Dispensaries Committees. Judge Wyse Power however, decided that neither of the Committees mentioned could sue or be sued, as they were not corporate bodies, and that only the Board of Health, which is a corporate body with a Seal, and charged with the administration of Poor Relief, could sue; that the action was properly brought and evidence was proceeded with. After hearing the evidence of _____, and her sister _____, the Judge held that there was insufficient corroboration against defendant and dismissed the case without prejudice, and expressed the opinion that the Board of Health was quite right in bringing those proceedings, even when the corroboration was not sufficient, in order to show up the culprit.*

'...requesting the introduction of legislation to amend the law as it now stands, re unmarried mothers, so that affiliation orders may be made against putative fathers for the maintenance of illegitimate children' (GC6/7, 8 February 1928, p6).

In 1937 the Board passed a resolution ordering that '*Unmarried mothers are not, in future, to be admitted*' (GC6/16, 20 March 1937, p20).

In January 1932 the Radiologist, Conor O'Malley, resigned. The Board then sought the approval of the Local Government Board to appoint a replacement radiologist with required qualifications and experience. The Local Government Board sanctioned the appointment but felt that the requirements were too stringent as such '*...conditions would unduly limit the candidates eligible*' (GC6/11, 9 March 1932, p2). The Medical staff however objected stating that it considered '*...this a key position. We are convinced that the continued success of the Staff as a team can only be*



insured by having a Radiologist whose opinion is sound. We feel that if by an oversight an unsuitable person were appointed, it would react unfavourably in Galway as a medical centre for a large part of the West of Ireland'. They further stated that 'The Central Hospital is fairly well recognised in this country as a first-class modern general Hospital, with special departments and clinical teaching. Surely we cannot be regarded as asking for too much when we try to ensure that the important post of Radiologist shall be filled by someone adequately qualified' (GC6/11, 9 March 1932, pp2-3). In May the Board was advised that the Minister agreed to the condition that candidates have knowledge of and experience in the therapeutic application of radium, and have at least two years experience in radiography and radiotherapy, attached to or on the staff of a modern general, medical and surgical Hospital' (GC6/11, 11 May 1932, p4). It was also agreed that the '...conditions of appointment might also contain a provision that the qualification of D.M.R.E. is desirable' (GC6/11, 11 May 1932, p5).

In December 1930 the Secretary advised that he had applied to the Hospital Sweepstakes Trust asking to have the Galway Central Hospital included, '*...as the Hospital comes within the terms of Section 1, sub-section 2, of the Act, for the reason that it is in receipt of voluntary subscriptions from the public, and at least 75% of its total accommodation for indoor patients is allocated or available for free treatment of patients'* (GC6/9, 10 December 1930, p6).

In October 1932 the architect, Mr T. J. Cullen (25 Suffolk Street, Dublin), advised the Board that '*...arrangements should be made for the purchase of extra land at the South side of the Hospital. He also recommends the purchase of the field on the North side should the price be reasonable, as the extra space would be valuable in connection with the Nurses' Home. Should the land not be available all the plans must be re-cast'* (GC6/11/, 12 October 1932, p8). The following month the Secretary reported that he and Commissioners Finnerty and Corbert, together with an engineer, Mr Emerson, visited and inspected the lands proposed to be acquired as a site for the new hospital and decided to purchase a field to the north of the Hospital measuring approximately 2 acres, 1 rood and 38 perches for the sum of £650 from the owner Patrick Forde, Sickeen. Also two fields, the property of Timothy Codyrne, Ragoon on the north-west of the Fever Hospital measuring approximately 1 acre, 3 roods and 5 perches for £360, and a further field to the South of the General Hospital approximately 3 acres, from the Messrs Sarsfield Brothers for £800 (GC6/11, 9 November 1932, p6).

In January 1933 the Local Government Board advised the Board that it thought the prices proposed to be paid for the lands was very high, but stated that it would not object to the proposal '*...if the Commissioners still wish to proceed on the basis of the prices submitted, but it would be unwise to acquire at the present any site other than what may be necessary to afford immediate employment on levelling or clearing. The plans have been received from the Architect and the project is of immense importance, involving anticipated expenditure of £515,000 and the proposals will be examined without delay'*. Apparently the figures mentioned by the Local Government Board



were incorrect in that the architect's original claim was for £515,000 but only £356,000 was awarded, and further reduced to £344,000 to provide £11,360 for the new District Hospital at Clifden. It was agreed that work could commence immediately on making the road, levelling and erecting fences. The rate of pay to be the same as that paid by the Galway County Council, 10 shilling per day for Gangers and 6 shilling 8 pence per day for labourers, with able bodied men in receipt of Home Assistance to get first preference (GH6/12, 11 January 1933, pp6-7).

In 1935 the Local Government Department wrote advising that the Minister had under review the CGHDC's request for expediting the erection of the new County Hospital. However, while the Minister wished to facilitate this request he '*...must consider the project in conjunction with the hospital scheme for the County as a whole. Pointing out that an order is in existence providing for District Hospitals in Ballinasloe and Clifden. While the local authority are completing arrangements for opening the new hospital in Clifden, they have not taken any steps with a view to the provision of the Hospital in Ballinasloe although the order was made so long ago as the 16th August, 1928. The Minister will have to insist on compliance with the terms of this order, and before he considers the question of the new County Hospital at Galway, he will await such definite steps by the local authority as will assure him of their intentions by observing their obligations in regard to the Ballinasloe Hospital*' (GC6/14, 20 February 1934, p13).

A report on electrical installation for the proposed new central hospital was submitted to the Board in May 1934, which stated '*The Installation of your own Plant for these services (heating, hot water, electric cooking and sterilising equipment) would be quite out of the question, both with regard to Capital expenditure and running costs, therefore the Supply would have to be obtained from the Electricity Supply Board*' (GC6/13, 9 May 1934, p11).

In July 1936 the Board resolved '*That the thanks of the committee be conveyed to (1) the Sweepstakes' Committee, (2) the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, and (3) the Hospital's Commission, for allocating sufficient funds to provide an up-to-date Hospital at Galway to meet the requirements of the Committee*' (GC6/15, 18 July 1936, p17).

The Hospital acquired additional lands, measuring 7 acres and 28 perches at a cost of £1,085.6.3 from the Urban District Council in 1936 (GC6/16, 20 February 1937, p13) at a cost of £3,500 (see GC6/17, 21 May 1938).

J.P. Tierney & Co. was appointed in 1934 as Consulting Engineers to design, plan and supervise the installation of the mechanical, electrical and kindred services at the new Hospital (GC6/17, 19 March 1938, p15).

In June 1938 A. Edward Smith, 19 Upper Merrion Street, Dublin was appointed Quantity Surveyor to prepare the Bills of Quantities for the erection of the new hospital (GC6/17, 25 June 1938, p19). At that time the Committee also discussed the particulars of accommodation in the Hospital,



indicating that each ward should not have more than 30 beds and where practicable should not have less than 24. The total number of beds was to be 319 (GC6/17, 25 June 1938, p19).

In January 1939 the Hospital's solicitor submitted the Deed of Conveyance relating to the land purchased from Galway Corporation as an extension to the site for the new Hospital (GC61/18, 21 January, 1938 p22). In May that year the Minister of Local Government and Public Health approved 352 beds for the new hospital, to cost in the region of £315,000. As a result of the increased accommodation in the hospital there would be need to extend the Nurses Home, and he requested the Board to prepare plans for the Hospital (GC6/18, May 1939, p22). The Board welcomed the decision whilst also drawing attention to the urgent need for the erecting of the new hospital. It could not understand '*...the delay in dealing with the Galway Hospital in view of the fact that it was the first County Hospital for which provision was made in the Sweepstake Funds*' (GC61/18, May 1939, p23).

In July 1939 the Board set out in a letter from its Architect to the Board of Health & Public Assistance the history of the various schemes prepared for the new hospital and advised that '*When the last scheme lodged was prepared it incorporated the results of discussions over a period of seven years on five sets of completed plans but despite that the bed accommodation has again been changed and other major amendments suggested.*

I submit that unless the responsible Authorities can finally agree on the requirements of the new building the present state of affairs will continue indefinitely. If however, a definite bed accommodation and complete schedule of accommodation can be finally agreed upon by all parties, I would be in a better position to prepare a scheme which would be finally approved' (GC6/18, July 1939, pp20-21).

Throughout 1940 there was much discussion between the Committee and the Department of Local Government and Public Health regarding the schedule of accommodation for the proposed Regional Hospital. For instance, in March the Committee held a special meeting to consider the schedule of accommodation submitted by their architect and the Department's opinion of it. The Department submitted a detailed letter outlining its observations and comments on the proposed schedule. Stating for instance that the '*...maternity department should be planned in a separate wing or block. It is considered that an endeavour should be made to plan it as a self-contained block on the site in such a way that there will be ample space to make additions in the future. If the maternity department is a separate block it should be provided with an operating theatre for performing caesarean sections, etc....*'(GC6/19, 30 March 1940, p2). The letter also stated that '*...it will be necessary for the Architect to recast completely his allocation of units owing to the reduction in the size of the main hospital block, and for other reasons set out in the detailed schedule. Such re-allocation of beds to units would not however make any difference in the observations of the Minister regarding the ward area per bed in each ward and the general ancillary accommodation required to each ward unit*' (GC6/19, 30 March 1940, p3). The Committee



approved of the suggested amendments in the Schedule of accommodation and sought the Minister's approval so that sketch plans could then be drawn up.

There were to be 142 surgical beds, with 12 of them been allocated to Ear, Nose and Throat cases. The number of proposed beds in the children's unit was 20 (GC6/19, 27 April 1940, pp20-22).

In June 1940 there was discussion regarding the type of fuel to be used in the new hospital, noting the difficulty in pricing fuel due to '*present conditions*' (World War II), as prices were changing from day to day (GC6/19, 15 June 1940, p20). The Local Government Department recommended that solid fuel system be adopted with a plan of the producer type for burning turf, coal or coke, that there should be a separate boiler house adjoining the proposed laundry, and that there be a covered fuel storage (GC6/19, 15 June 1940, p24).

A copy of a report from the Architect, Cullen, which was submitted to the Committee at its meeting in October is included in the minutes. This report stated that the current Scheme, Scheme G, provided '*...for a Hospital of 356 beds, and is planned in accordance with the accommodation required by the Local Government Department. There are separate blocks provided for chest cases and Maternity cases. The Chest Case Block has connections to the main x-ray Department of the first floor of the Main Block. The circulation of the Building is simple and straight forward and economy of planning has been of chief consideration*' (GC6/19, 17 October, 1940, p17). This detailed report gives a breakdown of the number of male and female beds in the various parts of the hospital, such as surgical medical, eye chest, children and isolation. These latest plans were then to be put before the Medical Staff, and if approved by them they would be submitted to the LGD for immediate attention.

The minutes for December 1940 include a financial statement on the New Hospital and Nurses Home, which shows that £103,179.4.2 was received from the Sweepstakes Fund (GC6/19, 21 December 1940, p3).

Meanwhile land had been purchased for the proposed District Hospital in Ballinasloe (GC6/19, 27 April 1940, p26). The architect's report and a schedule of proposed accommodation in the Hospital were submitted to the LGD for approval in March 1940. Approval was still awaited in December of that year (GC6/19, 21 December 1940, p29). The architect submitted to the Committee a complete set of final sketch plans and the Quantity Surveyor's estimate and consulting Engineer's report for the District Hospital in September 1941 (GC6/20, 20 September 1941, p021).

Also at the beginning of 1941 the Committee wished to proceed with the initial steps to commence site works, and lay foundations for the Regional Hospital (GC6/20, 15 February, 1941, p17).

However, as some alternations to the plans were still under consideration the Local Government Department advised that '*...even when the documents are finally in order there will be no considerable extent of site development work which can be approved in advance of the main building works as the site works are intimately connected with the sites of existing buildings and the*



arrangements to be made for replacements of the latter during the course of construction of the new building' (GC6/20, 1 March 1941, p2).

At this point a revised accommodation scheme was for 354 beds, and the minutes for 1st March include details of the architects sketch and plans. Given that '*...work was never before so badly needed in Galway'* the Committee approved the erection of a wall enclosing the site, at an approximate cost of £37,000, and requested the Department's sanction to enable the commencement of other works, such as the extension to the nurses' home. The Department responded in April advising that it considered that the Maternity block should be undertaken before the extension to the nurses' home, as it would make a great contribution toward the provision of accommodation for patients. It also pointed out that a wall already exists around the site, and furthermore that a low wall with railings would be preferable in any case than the high wall proposed by the Committee (GC6/20, 19 April 1941, p23).

Tenders for the maternity hospital were advertised in August 1941 (GC6/20, 16 August 1941, p17). The architect submitted an approximation estimate for the building of the hospital, based on 1939 rates, which amounted to £393,105 (GC6/20, 20 September, 1941, p 23).

Following a review of the tenders for the maternity block the Committee approved the tender of W. & J. Bolger, Ardee Street, Dublin in the sum of £39,966.16.7 plus £1,084.17.8 for the substitution of limestone for pre-cast concrete sills, copings, etc plus £204.9.9 for oak block flooring as a substitute for line inwards, or a gross total of £41,246.4.0, subject to the sanction of the Minister (GC6/20, 27 September 1941, p3). In February 1942 an Architectural Inspector for the Local Government Department reported that the progress of work on the new block was unsatisfactory. That when inspected only 20 men were employed in excavating trenches for foundations, erecting sheds for concrete block-making and a shed for the men's mess (GC6/21. 21 February 1942, p15). The Contractor, Bolger, advised that they were encountering difficulty in obtaining '*...expeditiously necessary materials for preliminary works, due to present restrictions, and difficulties of transport. These difficulties, however, have been surmounted, and progress for the past few weeks shows satisfactory improvement'* (GC6/21, 21 February 1942, p16). However, progress on the building work continued to be poor, due to the scarcity of petrol. The architect advised that '*...48 gallons of petrol were received on 28/3/42, but as gravel must be screened and graded, the pump kept at work to dry the basement and blocks made when possible, no petrol is to spare for lorry to draw either gravel or gear'*. The Committee referred the matter to the Department of Supplies (GC6/21, 18 April 1842, p11).

In June 1942 the Committee considered the tenders for the mechanical services in the maternity block, and recommended that the lowest tender, from Brightside Engineering Co. in the sum of £5,716.10.0 be accepted. It also recommended the acceptance of the lowest tender for the electrical work from Patrick Lynch in the sum of £5,699.8.3. Both were subject with obtaining the



appropriate licence for the export from England of necessary materials (GC6/21, 20 June 1942, p20).

At this point the Committee received Departmental approval of the final sketch plans for the new hospital, with some minor adjustments required for the boiler house and laundry block, and authorised the preparation of the draft working drawings and the complete draft specification.

With regard to the Nurses' Home the Local Government Board noted in 1933 that the plans were very elaborate, and *'It would appear that the building is intended to accommodate Nurses and Probationers, and the records show that at present there are 30 trained nurses and 29 probationers in the Institution, and requesting on what basis it is calculated that accommodation would be required for 100 Nurses in the new building'* (GC6/12, 14 June 1933, p8). The architect, Mr Cullen, responded advising that the *'...new hospital has been planned for 332 beds and the average daily bed occupancy has been assumed at 90% .i.e. 300 beds. The recognised ideal ration of bed occupancy to Nursing Staff for a General Hospital is 3 beds to one Nursing Staff, plus 6% for special duty. For 332 beds 117 Nurses will be required, and for 300 beds 106 Nurses will be required, and for economical reasons he has allowed for 100 Nursing Staff only. He fails to see where the plans are elaborate'* (GC6/12. 14 June, p8).

In July the Local Government Board advised that the Minister was still of the opinion that the accommodation plans were too elaborate and the Nurses Home should have accommodation for 60 nurses only. The Local Government Board advised that the Hospital accommodation was to be reduced to 220 beds, even though the Hospital had at that time 294 beds. It was decided then to call a public meeting to protest against the action of the Local Government Board (GC6/12, 16 August 1933, pp12-13).

The building for the Nurses Homes commenced in about 1934 and progressed in 1935, with Messrs Beckett & Co., contractors, charged with its erection. There were problems with the steel work, so much so that a consulting engineer, Mr MacAteer, *'...would not pass such work but would order it to be taken up and newly constructed...'*(GC6/14, 17 April, 1935, p13). There was further discussion regarding the matter in the following months, and also the Clerk of Works' competence and experience. However, the architect, Cullen advised the Board in July that the adjustment of the steel works was to be carried out in the first week of August. The following month the Board received a report from MacAteer on the realigned steel work and found it all to be in order, but did comment that *'It may interest you to know that the steel foreman who did the rectification work told me that he had never seen a steelwork structure as badly put together as this one was originally. He said there was very great difficulty indeed in forming out all the bent bolts and other twisted connections...'* (GH6/14, 21 September 1935, p12). In January 1936 the issue of a Clerk of Works on the site was still ongoing. The post was offered to a Mr George O'Connor, New Hospital, Shan Ross, Abbey, Roscrea (GC6/15, 18 January 1936, p11).



The tender in the sum of £2,187 for the electrical installation at the Home was offered to Haden's Engineering Co. Dublin. The tender in the sum of £1,786 for the heating installation was offered to Baird Ltd, Dublin (GC6/15, 20 June 1936, p13).

The Engineer reported in December 1937 that the builders' work of the Home was practically complete, and that the electrical work would also be completed shortly, so that the building would soon be ready for occupation (GC6/16, 18 December 1937, p11). The cost of building the Home was £43,488.10.00, with an additional £3,800.12.11 required for equipment (GC6/19, 21 December 1940, p3)

In 1939 the Matron advised the Committee that the Nurses complain that the New Home is very cold, as in some rooms the radiators do not heat, and that *'the passage from the Home to the Hospital is very exposed and she enquired if a covered way could be provided; that a telephone from the Home to the Hospital would be very useful; that a vegetable store would seem very necessary in connection with the Home; that she requires the Committee to consider the appointment of an engineer to look after the different branches in the Hospital, via., Nurses' Home, Maternity, Fever and General Hospital'* (GC6/18, 21 January 1939, p18). The problem with the heating appeared to be that the boiler-man had not received sufficient instruction in how to operate the plant.

The Abstract of Accounts (GC6/24) gives very useful information on the number of patients treated in the hospital for various half years between September 1923 and March 1942. Recording for instance that a total of 41,620 patients were treated for the half year ended 30 September 1929, for the same period in 1939 it treated a total of 59,250 patients. The Abstract also includes the names of all officers, giving their position and salary.

Arrangement

This collection consists of three main categories of records, 21 volumes minutes of the Hospital & Dispensaries Committee (1922-1942), which are arranged in chronological order, a Register of Patients Admitted and Discharged from the hospital (1930-1932), and an abstract of accounts (1922-1942).

The item reference number (e.g. GC6/1) should be used in full when citing documents or records, and each reference cited should be preceded by the initials GCCA (Galway County Council Archives, e.g. GCCA GC6/1).

Overall this collection illustrates aspects of the administration of the hospital and dispensaries, particular in terms of its staffing. It should be of interest to administrative, social, medical, and local historians. The minutes also contain much interesting information relating to the planning, designing and building of the new central hospital. Some genealogists may also find the collection of interest as staff members are often referred to by name, as are some patients. Indeed all staff member names are recorded in the Abstract of Accounts (GC6/24).



The extracts from the various Minute books listed herewith are intended as a representation of the proceedings. The purpose of their inclusion is to give the reader an indication of the Committees' areas of concern and responsibility. It is hoped that the extracts will clearly and fairly reflect their work and involvement with the administration of the Hospital, dispensaries and medical services in the county.

Readers are advised, if interested in the preceding management and administration of the Hospital, to also consult the archive collections for Galway Infirmary, 1802-1892, (GH2/), Galway Hospital, 1892-1922 (GH1/), and also the County Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance, 1922-1941, (GC5/). Galway County Council Minutes (GC1/) may also be of interest. These collections are held by Galway County Council Archives.

In addition, readers are asked not to view as definitive the appended list of various staff members.

Overall the collection is in relatively good condition. The minutes are recorded in bound volumes, the first few volumes are typed on poor quality light paper.

Several volumes of minutes are closed, as for a period between 1925 and 1934 the Committee often recorded in the minutes the names and ailments of patients, and also identified the names of unmarried mothers and the names of the putative fathers of their children.

Patria McWalter
Archivist



Related Collections

Records held by Galway County Council Archives:-

- Galway Infirmary, 1802-1892 (GH2/)
- Galway Hospital, 1892-1922, (GH1/)
- County Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance, 1922-1941, (GC5/)
- Galway County Council Minutes, 1899 – to-date (GC1/)

Galway City Council Archives:-

- Galway Urban District Council Archives, 1902-1932, (GA3/)

James Hardiman Library Archives Service, NUI, Galway:-

- Galway Corporation, 1485-1818, LA1, (20 items)
- Galway Town Commissioners, 1836-1899, LA2 (8 volumes)
- Galway Urban District Council, 1899-1921, LA4 (4 volumes)
- Galway Urban Sanitary Authority, 1874-1920, LA3 (6 volumes)

Health Service Executive

- Western Health Board Minute Books, available on <http://www.lenus.ie/hse/>



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Appendices



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



1. LIST OF SOME STAFF MEMBERS⁴

Secretary to C.G.H.D.C. / Clerk

Gallagher, J.	1922 – 1929
Carter, J.M.	192? – 1935 (on sick leave for over 12 months, prior to resignation)
Sloyan, Una	1934 - (temporary Clerk)
Gallagher, John	? - 1941 ⁵
Kyne, M.	1941 (acting Secretary)

Matron of County Galway Central Hospital

O' Connell, Sr M Beignus	1922 – 1923 (resigned)
McVeigh, Sr M Eugenius	1923 –

Assistant Matron

Cronin, Sr M Ursual	1921 -
Keaveny, Sr M Francis	1925? – 1931 (resigned)
Callanan, Sr M Aloysius	1931 -
Monahan, Sr. M Paschal	1931 –
McGlynn, Sr M. Bernadette	1932 –
Ursula, Sr. M.	?

Matron of the Branch Hospital

Keaveny, Sr M Francis	1924
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Clifden Hospital (opened in 1935?)

Byron, Sister of Mercy M.	1935 -
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Surgeons

O'Malley, Dr Michael G	1927? - 1932
Bodkin Mahon, Dr R	1927? – 1941 (resigned) ⁶

⁴ See Abstract of Accounts (GC6/24) for lists of staff, their positions and salaries

⁵ Died 1941, (GC6/20, 15 November 1941)

⁶ GC6/20, 18 January 1941, p2

**Visiting Surgeon**

Niall, Dr Eamonn 1942 -

Medical Superintendent / Visiting Physician to the Central HospitalDavitt, Dr Michael⁷ mid 1922 – + 1928

Fallon, Dr Martin W. 1919 - (born in Galway in 1897, graduated as M.D. 1924, 2½ years in England; January 1929 appointed Lecturer in Clinical Medicine and Intern Examiner in the National University of Ireland; October 1929 appointed Visiting Physician to the Hospital)

(Second) Visiting Physician

O'Donnell, Dr Michael J 1937

Resident Medical Officer

Jennings, Dr 1927 -

Burns, Dr 1929? -

Toner, Dr Francis 1932 –

Timoney, Dr Maude F June 1932 – temporary for six months (The Lodge, Killala, Co. Mayo)

Radiologist

O'Malley, Dr Conor 1925? – January 1932 (resigned, acted as temporary Radiologist until his Successor's appointment)

McHugh, William April 1933 –

McHugh, W. Dr 1933? -

Ophthalmologist

McEnri, Seaghain ? - +1930

O'Malley, Dr Conor 1930 – 1939?

Honorary Gynaecologist & Obstetrician

Kinkead, Richard 192?

Morris, Dr Dennis V. 1921 – 1941 (Dr Morris died on 3rd July 1941)⁸⁷ Son of the founder of the Land League⁸ GC6/20, 19 July 1941, p2

**Visiting Anaesthetist**

O'Malley, Dr Sarah (nee Joyce) 1929 - (wife of Dr Conor O'Malley)

Pathologist

Walsh, Dr Thomas 1924? - ?

Dental Surgeon

Lenihan, F 1922 - (from Eyre Square, Galway, born October 1885, qualified in 1907; honorary Dental Surgeon to the Central Hospital, 1922-1928; temporary dental surgeon 1928-1929, permanent dental surgeon 1929 - ??)

Commissioner performing the duties of the Co. Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance and its Associated Committees

MacGuaigin, Enri Seosamh December 1930 – June 1931

Bartley, Patrick July 1931 -



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944

**2. LIST OF NUMBER OF PATIENTS IN THE HOSPITAL ON VARIOUS DATES**

(Number of beds in the Hospital 210)

Date	Total No. of Patients ⁹
18 March 1922	156
15 April 1922	159
13 May 1922	175
10 June 1922	179
8 July 1922	176
12 August 1922	166
9 September	157
14 October 1922	149
11 November 1922	156
9 December 1922	161
14 April 1923	181
16 October 1923	203
8 December 1923	177
January 1924	160
June 1924	198
January 1925	223
June 1925	260
January 1926	180
June 1926	205

⁹ Includes the general wards, fever and maternity wards the prior to 1924 patients in the Prospect Hill (Surgical) Branch



January 1927	183
June 1927	193
January 1928	182
June 1928	241
January 1929	188
June 1929	245
January 1930	165
June 1930	247
January 1931	218
June 1931	262
January 1932	287
June 1932	303
December 1932	290
January 1933	286
June 1933	246
December 1933	271
January 1934	241
June 1934	220
December 1934	230
January 1935	243
January 1935	265
January 1936	237
June 1936	277
January 1937	283
June 1937	284



January 1938	282
June 1938	296
January 1939	289
June 1939	308
January 1940	319
June 1940	297
January 1941	261
June 1941	325
January 1942	271
June 1942	352



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



2. LIST OF NUMBER OF PATIENTS IN THE CLIFDEN HOSPITAL ON VARIOUS DATES

Date	Total No. of Patients ¹⁰
June 1936	19
January 1937	14
June 1937	17
January 1938	19
June 1938	15

¹⁰ Includes the general wards, fever and maternity wards the prior to 1924 patients in the Prospect Hill (Surgical) Branch



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



4. CHRONOLOGY OF HOSPITAL MANAGEMENT

- 1638 Wentworth, the Lord Deputy, directed that a public infirmary be erected in and for the county of Galway
- c.1678 Building in Woodquay was provided for that purpose, which subsequently moved to Abbeygate Street
- 1796 An Act of the Irish Parliament called for 'erecting and establishing public infirmaries and hospitals in this kingdom'¹¹.
- 17th April 1796 Galway Corporation meet on at which it was ordered '*that a committee consisting of the principal gentlemen of the town be, and are, accordingly appointed, to inquire and find out a proper place within the county of the town of Galway for erecting a public infirmary or hospital for the reception of poor, sick and disabled persons*'¹².
- The Governors of the Erasmus Smith School shortly afterwards donated a two acre site at Prospect Hill for the Infirmary¹³. However, it was many years later before the building was actually constructed and completed.
- 1802 The Infirmary at Abbeygate Street was finally moved to the new accommodation in Prospect Hill.
- 1892 Galway Hospital Act formerly established the Hospital under which the administration and management of the Infirmary was more formally established.
- 1892 - 1922 It was then managed by a Board of Management.
- 1922 Section 8, Sub-section (2), (3), and (4) of the Local Government Act abolished Rural District Councils, their functions were also transferred to the county councils and administrated through Boards of Health and Public Assistance. These Boards, were established by County Councils to operate as executive committees of the county council to perform health, sanitary and housing functions, assuming responsibility for

¹¹Ibid., p315

¹²Ibid, p315

¹³ A note on a front page of the first volume of minutes (GH2/1) of proceedings of the Governor's meetings records that in Hardiman's History of Galway, it is written that '1765 Board of Erasmus Smith granted 2 acres of ground forever' on which to build a County Infirmary' (GH2/1, p2).



administering measures against infectious diseases and tuberculosis, sanitary arrangements, labourers' cottages schemes, water and sewerage schemes and a number of schemes including blind welfare, boarded out children, and school medical services in small towns and villages. They also had responsibility for the supervision of county homes, hospitals and dispensaries, and home assistance.

- January 1922 A Hospital, Homes and Homes Assistance Committee¹⁴ managed the hospital on behalf of the Board of Health in county Galway. The Poor Law Union Workhouse was developed as a Central Hospital to serve both the City and the County¹⁵.
- 1940 County Management Act
- August 1942 The Boards of Health and Public Assistance abolished when the administration of public assistance and sanitary matters came under the direct control of the County Councils acting through the new county managers.

¹⁴ Galway Hospital, 1892-1922 archive collection GH1/2, 21 December 1921

¹⁵ The Workhouse complex of buildings was demolished in the 1950s, with a new Regional Hospital constructed close by. The Regional Hospital changed its title in the late 20th to University College Hospital Galway (UCHG).



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



4. ABBREVIATIONS

BHPA	Board of Health and Public Assistance
C.B.H.P.A.	County Board of Health & Public Assistance
Co.Co.	County Council
C.D.B.	Congested Districts Board
C.G.H.D.C.	County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee
D.C.	District Councillor
D.D.	Dispensary District
D.L.G.P.H.	Department of Local Government & Public Health (Roinn Riathaltais Aiteamhail agus Salinte Poiblidhe)
G.J.	Grand Jury
H.A.	Home Assistance
H & D	Hospital and Dispensaries
H.H.A.	Homes and Homes Assistance
I.R.A	Irish Republican Army
J.P.	Justice of Peace
L.G.D.	Local Government Department
M.O.	Medical Officer
M.P.	Member of Parliament
R.D.C.	Rural District Council
S.S.O.	Sanitary Services Officer
T.M.O.	Tuberculosis Medical Officer



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944

**Galway County Board of Health and
Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries
Committee,
1922 - 1942
Archive Collection**

GC6/



GC6/

Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance,
County Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee, 1922 - 1944



A. Minutes, 1922 - 1942

Bound volumes of typed minutes recording details of attendance and proceedings of originally fortnightly, but from circa 1932 monthly meetings of the Committee, held in the Board Room of the Central Hospital, relating to the management of the central hospital, dispensary and nursing services, including district nurses¹⁶. The management primarily related to staffing issues, such as the payment of salaries and expenses, the control and discipline of staff, the appointment of nurses, and dispensary doctors, the maintenance of its three ambulances and a hearse, and also the acceptance of tenders for goods and supplies such as milk, eggs, meat, slippers, table linen, soap, candles, coffins, medicines and so on.

Includes details from various reports, such as from the Matron (until 1924 from both the Prospect Hill Branch and the Central Hospital) generally reporting on staff issues such as staff absences due to annual leave or illness, appointment and training of probationer nurses, and reporting on the number of patients in the hospital, and reports from the Storekeeper generally relating to the supply of commodities such as meat, eggs, sugar, butter and so on. Also includes details of correspondence received and dealt with, such as from the Local Government Department and County Board of Health.

From April 1922 onwards separate Minutes are recorded which deal with Medical Charities Business responsible for the management and staffing of the dispensaries. Details relate to issuing of admission tickets to patients for hospital care, vaccinations and outbreaks of various diseases, such as small pox and typhoid fever, and the appointment of dispensary staff, such as mid-wives, who were sometimes from the Lady Dudley Nursing Society¹⁷ or other nursing societies..

¹⁶ The Public Health Nurse (PHN) was first included by an Board Altranais (the Irish Nursing Board) on the register of Irish nurses in 1960. This resulted from the merge of midwifery services, voluntary district nursing services and nurses employment by local authorities. ('Original research: The role of the public health nurse in a changing society', Caitroina Aine Nic Philibin, Colin Griffiths, Gobnait Byrne, Paul Horan, Anne-Marie Brady and Cecily Begley, *JAN, Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 9 Nov 2009.

¹⁷ Lady Dudley Nursing Scheme supplied nurses to some of the most remote and impoverished areas in the country. The National Archives of Ireland (NAI) hold a small collection relating to the society, which includes a photographic album dating from the 1930s which shows many of the nurses and the buildings from which they were then operating.



Minutes, from [1934] onwards include statistics on the number of patients, male and female, admitted and discharged to the hospital over the previous month, and the number remaining, together with returns showing the several Unions in County Galway in which the patients in the hospital resided. The minutes also include confirmation that various reports, financial and other records, such as the Patients' Register, Ledger, the Clerk's Account of Petty Disbursements, and the Clerk's Estimate of Provisions and Necessaries Required, together with the reports of the Finance (often reporting on unpaid accounts) and Visiting Committees, the Matron (whose report often gives the names of ward maids, cooks, trainee nurses, nurses and so on), and of the Medical Staff were produced, examined and approved together with details of required action relating to the information provided therein. These include details (and often the names) of unmarried mothers where the Hospital attempted to re-coup maintenance fees from putative fathers. Also includes details of orders and letters received from or written to the Local Government Board and others, and details of subsequent resolutions passed and instructions issued authorising required action.

Some of the minutes are annotated 'Office Copy'.

The minutes are generally dated, and signed by the Secretary and Chairman of the Committee. Most minutes are also annotated with a stamp indicating they were approved by the County Galway Board of Health.

Average size approximately 200pp

1. 25 February 1922 – Includes:
9 December 1922 Matron's report noting that 'I.R.A. vacated the Hospital' (25 February 1922, p3).
 - Correspondence read from 'Messrs. J.C. Conroy & Son, Solicitors, dated 1/2/'22, stating that the case against Bro. Frisby, for maintenance of Industrial School Boys was adjourned to the 6th March, and requesting further instructions.
"IT WAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED THAT PAYMENT OF 10/- PER WEEK FOR EACH BOY, BE ACCEPTED. BRO. FRISBY PAYING LAW COSTS". (25 February 1922, p4).
 - Circular from the Local Government Department 'In order to meet the wishes of the patients admitted to County Hospitals, and to make such Institutions popular with the people of the County, the Dept. have decided that any Doctor may, in consultation with the Resident Surgeon, treat any patients who have asked for his services, and similarly in the case of operations, every facility and assistance shall be afforded to him in the operation theatre to operate when advisable.
THE COMMITTEE...CANNOT BELIEVE IT IS THE INTENTION OF THE DEPARTMENT, THAT THE TERMS OF THE CIRCULAR SHOULD APPLY TO THIS INSTITUTION, AS



PERHAPS NO HOSPITAL IN IRELAND, OUTSIDE DUBLIN, HAS THE ADVANTAGES OF SUCH AN EXPERIENCED HON. MEDICAL STAFF, SO THAT PATIENTS CAN HAVE NO COMPLAINT IN THIS RESPECT' (4 March 1922, pp2-3).

- 'Dr Rossiter, Ballinasloe, pointed out that there were some Drugs, etc, remaining in the Workhouse Surgery, which would go bad if not used up.
"The Secretary reported that the Workhouse Officials in all the Institutions which had been closed up in the County, were asked months ago, to have Drugs removed to local Dispensaries, and Appliances sent to Central Hospital. He repeated those instructions to Dr. Rossiter' (18 March 1922, p4).
- *Matron's report (Central Hospital) '...A patient named Patrick Cassidy¹⁸ was shot dead by a party of men who entered the Hospital at 10 pm. Inquest held the following evening (18 March 1922, p6).*
- 'ARAN ISLANDS: DR. JAMES O'BRIEN RECENTLY APPOINTED:
Relieving Officer reported that he took over charge of the District on the 17th February, and Dr. M. O'Brien relinquished Duty' (1 April, 5).
- 'That we request the Police Authorities to accompany the Secretary, and inform the persons who had tendered for milk supply, that unless milk is delivered this evening, it will be taken by force. We consider it a deplorable thing that any man (or men) were so utterly devoid of human charity, as to leave the Hospitals in which there are 160 patients without milk for 2 days. If the price offered (1/7½ per gallon) is considered inadequate, the Committee is prepared to submit to independent Arbitration' (3 April 1922).
- Correspondence from the Local Government Department 6th April 1922, from Dr. McDonnell, Renvyle Dispensary District, Connemara, 'stating that the District is without a Midwife for past year, and one is very badly required' (15th April 1922, p1).
- 'Seal. The Secretary suggested that the Seal theretofore adopted by late Guardians of Galway Union be now adopted by this Committee, substituting for "The Poor Law Guardians, Galway Union, 1839" "The Galway Hospital & Dispensaries Committee 1922" in Irish Characters. The Committee approved of this suggestion, but as a difference of opinion exists as to the proper wording, the Local Government Department to be asked for an expression of opinion' (29 April 1922, p3).
- 'The Secretary pointed out that the General Wards in Central Hospital are overcrowded.
ORDER "The Secretary is authorised to have portion of Main Buildings fitted up for admission of Patients if necessary, and wards-maids also transferred to same, with Matron's approval. The attention of the County Board of Health and Local Government Department is directed to

¹⁸ Cassidy, from Crossard, Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, was a farmer and Congested Districts Board official. 'On the 17th of March 1922 an inquest into the death of Patrick Cassidy was held at the Galway Workhouse who had been shot dead there the previous night. The inquest heard that Cassidy had been admitted to the hospital on the 8th of March suffering from three gunshot wounds, he would give no information as to how he received these wounds. Patrick Molloy, a patient in the same ward as Cassidy, gave evidence that two men entered the ward, one asked for Cassidy by name, one of the men approached Cassidy as he lay in bed and fired two shots'.
<http://irishmedals.org/gpage53.html> See also Connacht Tribune reports on 18th and 25 March 1922



this overcrowding, and requested to push forward at once, arrangements for alterations in Main Building as the matter is very urgent' (13 May 1922, p2).

- 'DISPENSARY BULDINGS. The Secretary having drawn attention to the fact that in some areas such Buildings are part of Workhouses now offered for sale, the County Board of Health stated they would endeavour to make arrangements to retain such portions (13 May 1922, p8).
- 'FARM. Planting of same considered too expensive and besides it is required as exercise ground for Patients;
ORDER "To be laid down in Grass, except a very small plot, at close of this season" (27 May 1922, p1).
- 'MILITARY HUTS. Must be removed from present sites. Could be used for consumptives.
ORDER. "Ask County Board of Health to have them re-erected on a suitable site, for use as consumptive wards". (27 May 1922, p1).
- 'BURIAL OF POOR PATIENTS The Secretary asked for instructions how he was to act in cases, where friends of deceased persons were unable to convey the body home for interment. In a recent case he had to send a coffin home in Ambulance.
ORDER "Secretary to use his discretion, but the committee believe that as poor patients discharged from Hospital have to be sent home in the Ambulance, the same rule should apply to deceased persons" (27 May 1922, p5).
- 'ISSUE OF DISPENSARY TICKETS The Secretary C.B. Health wrote that L.G. Department had notified in letter 11846/22 that Members of Urban and Rural District Councils can in future issue Red Tickets and perform all other works as were heretofore performed by Poor Law Guardians.
"The Secretary reported having so notified the Clerks of the 10 Rural and 2 Urban District Councils in the County..." (27 May 1922 (p7).
- 'PATIENTS UNDER NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE The Secretary of Co. Galway Insurance Society, pointed out that persons who did not become insured until after 31/12/18 or who jointed the Society after 5/7/20, are not entitled to participate in Hospital Benefits.
"The Secretary replied that he had no recollection of such a stipulation being made, when case for Society and Commission was put verbally before the Committee. The Members of the Committee who were present, fully agreed.
ORDER "So inform National Health Commission" (10 June 1922, 4).
- 'PATIENTS IN PROSPECT HILL HOSPITAL The Secretary reported having ascertained from the Books of that Institution, that there are some patients under treatment for prolonged periods, ranging from 28th November 1921, to 31st March last...
ORDER "Ask Surgeons to endeavour to have such cases transferred to Central Hospital with a view to making room for urgent Surgical cases" (10 June 1922).



- 'ADMISSION OF PATIENTS ... Rev. James Kelly, P.P. Knock, Spiddal asked if he was competent to issue Tickets for admission of Patients to Hospital, as it is difficult to persuade them, even when so advised by Doctor.
"The Secretary replied that patients can only be admitted on a Ticket from a Medical Practitioner. If however, Fr. Kelly at any time sends a telegram or letter requisitioning Ambulance, the matter will be attended to"' APPROVED (24 June 1922, p2).
 - 'BURIAL OF PATIENTS: The Secretary reported that formerly Workhouse inmates opened graves in Galway Cemetery, for deceased inmates of the Institution. The Cemetery Caretaker has now to do this work, and the scale of payment is fixed by Cemetery Committee...' (22 July 1922, p3).
 - Report from Dr Michael Davitt, which includes a 'Revised Dietary Scale for Galway Hospital.....'; 'Hours of Duty for Nurses....' and concludes 'I shall be glad to carry out any suggestion the Committee makes with regard to the better running of the Hospital and I feel very hopeful that in a short time the hospital will have lost the "Workhouse atmosphere" and will be regarded as an Institution for the speedy, and as far as possible, efficient treatment of disease' (22 July 1922, pp5-9).
 - SURGICAL CASES Dr Mahon reported that sometimes they are overcrowded in Prospect Hill Branch Hospital, but usually have plenty of accommodation. He is under the impression that there is still an idea among the receiving staff that none but Paying cases can be admitted, and also they do not appear to have grasped the idea that the place is now exclusively a Surgical Hospital' (25 November 1922, p3).
 - 'Dr Casey, Clifden, reported that Clifden Workhouse Buildings are gradually disappearing. The Dispensary has been completely destroyed, and he removed to a private house whatever Drugs etc, were left. ...' (9 December, 1922, p7).
2. 13 January 1923 - Includes:
8 December 1923 - 'ADMISSION OF PATIENTS Inform Medical Practitioners throughout the County, that patients sent to Hospital can only be considered as non-paying in the event of their having been attended by the Medical Officer on a Dispensary Ticket, previous to admission' (13 January 1923, p6).
- Letter from the Local Government Trade Department stating 'that it is not the desire of the Ministry to compel the Committee to purchase Coal from their Contractors, when English Coal can be obtained much cheaper, but they strongly recommend Institutions to support Irish Coal where possible, as this is an Industry which gives a lot of employment' (13 January 1923, p7).



- Details of letter from the Local Government Department, 'COMMITTAL OF LUNATICS ...that so long as any area continues to be unsafe for the Civic Guard, and generally for persons engaged in Civil Administration, the difficulties at present experienced in such cases as regards the Committal of lunatics must, it is feared, continue to be one of the minor discomforts inseparable from such a condition, ...'(10 March 1923, p14).
- Details of Inspectors Report on Moycullen Dispensary, 'No sanitary conveniences for use of patients at Dispensary. Records not recently examined. Scalpels and scissors in Dispensary of bad quality. Account of expenses not furnished...'(10 November 1923, p13).
- PROMOTION IN THE SERVICES
RESOLVED:- That existing Dispensary Medical Officers & Dispensary Midwives may be offered promotion, before vacancies are publicly advertised, provided however, that no such official will be entitled to promotion, who will not be able to satisfy the examiners that they have a reasonable knowledge of the Irish language, and that 12 months from this date allowed to acquire such a knowledge' (10 November, 1923, p19).

3. 12 January 1924 – Some minutes are annotated with a stamp indicating they were approved
10 December 1924 by the County Galway Board of Health.

Includes:

- 'Matron of Central Hospital reported that Archdeacon and Mrs Berry, Rev. Mr Ormsby, Mrs and Miss Ormsby, Miss Ginnely and Mrs Palmer sent presents of papers fruit and flowers to the patients since last meeting' (9 August, p10).
- Tuam Dispensary District. 'District Nurse Ryan applied to have a small house provided for her to live in, as it is very inconvenient for patients to be calling at lodgings and the landlady generally objects to answering the door'.
Refused' (9 August, p 21).
- The Local Government Department advised that the 'Matron is to be considered as the Executive Officer of the Hospital and is to be held responsible for the accuracy of all the records, no matter by whom written....
In further all Reports relating to the Internal management of the Institution (other than Medical work) to be made to the committee by the Matron' (13 September, p5).
- 'As soon as the new Hospital is ready for occupation, and the necessary furniture, bedding etc available, all patients at present in the Medical Wards of the Central Hospital to be transferred to the new Wing so as to give Contractors an opportunity of proceeding with the work of renovation in the Medical Wards. If, when the Medical cases are all transferred, sufficient accommodation is available for the surgical cases at present in the Branch Hospital, the later Institution is to be closed down and the equipment in the operating theatre there fitted up in the



Central Hospital. When the operating theatre is in working order no further Surgical cases to be admitted to the Branch Hospital, if absolutely essential, medical cases may be admitted for the time being, unless sufficient accommodation is available in the Central Hospital' (13 September, p18).

- 'Secretary reported having again directed the attention of the County Council to the claim of close on £2,500 against the British Military for occupation and damage to the Galway Workhouse (now Central Hospital) between July 1921 and January 1922; that in response to a request from the County Council he sent all documents and correspondence which passed between the British War Office and himself in January 1922 to the County Council in support of this claim. He has been informed that the County Council are dealing with the matter' (7 November, p9).
- '...That as both attendants contracted fever and lost their lives in the discharge of their duties, we recommend that Board of Health to pay their immediate relatives, who were partly dependent on them, a gratuity equal to 5 years salary or £90 in each case' (10 December, p6).

Poor quality – carbon ink fading especially in 1st few pages.

4. 14 January 1925 – Some minutes are annotated with a stamp indicating they were approved
9 December 1925 by the County Galway Board of Health.

Includes:

- 'MATERNITY HOSPITAL The Matron to be informed that all patients are to be admitted under their proper names and a list submitted to each meeting, showing names and addresses of unmarried mothers admitted to the Institution' (11 February, p11).
- 'The Board of Health allocated £36,230 for the services of the Committee in respect of the financial year commencing 1st April next, which amount has since been reduced by £1,00, owing to the County Council reducing the Board's demand. To this may be added a possible £3,300, receipts from other sources, which would leave the total assets as £38,550. The actual expenditure for the current year was £40,071. Allowing the same expenditure for the coming year, plus £2,200 debit balance on the 31st instant, the assets will fall £3,721, short of the amount required. It is quite evident, therefore, that saving must be effected in the coming year if the Committee is to live within their income...' (11 March, p2).
- 'The Medical Staff reported that in view of the growing abuse of the central Hospital by people obtaining free treatment there to which they are not entitled, the co-operation of the committee and the Board of Health is requested to have this abuse checked. The Honorary Staff are willing to give their services free, only to these who are genuinely too poor to pay even a small fee. It is obviously unfair to the honorary Staff to find an increasing number of what would be ordinarily their private patients admitted under their charge in the Central Hospital, to be treated gratis. Furthermore, many patients are now attracted to the Central Hospital, who have no claim to be treated either as paying or non-paying in a Hospital supported by Public Funds. The Medical Staff are therefore requesting to have the method of admission that was in force at the late County Infirmary modified and adopted in the Central Hospital, viz:- That each



paying patient be admitted to Hospital after first consulting the number of the Medical Staff who will be responsible for his or her treatment therein, and who will sign the ticket of admission: that acute emergency cases and dispensary patients be admitted directly in accordance with the existing routine. Should the committee be in agreement with this proposal of the Medical Staff requesting that steps be taken to notify the dispensary doctors of the County accordingly' (8 April).

- 'Chaplains From Rev. T Ormsby, Acting Chaplain, reported that the Rev. J. F. Nash has been nominated as Rector of Galway but cannot take up duty until the end of September. PROPOSED by Councillor Flanagan, SECONDED by Councillor Corbett and RESOLVED:- "That we recommend the L.G. Department to appointed Rev. J. F. Nash as Chaplain (Protestant) to the Central Hospital at a salary of £46 per annum, on condition that if the Reverend gentleman has not at present a knowledge of the Irish language, his appointment shall be on probation for a period of 12 months, to enable him acquire a knowledge of the language within that time" (9 September).
- '.....The payments at today's Meeting amount to £665, so that the actual debit balance after today's meeting will be £1,104, and the Treasurer has over and over stated that he will not allow an overdraft on the Committee's account.
"The County Council has already been so informed, and they replied that whereas continual applications are being received from the Board of Health and its Associated Committees for more money, they are not getting any information of a serious attempt to come to close quarters with the earnest effort at retrenchment and economy; that the Council finds it very difficult in getting in the current rate and any attempt to increase these rates will inevitably create great discontent amongst the ratepayers; if the Community cannot afford the existing overhead expenditure, then the only way is to cut down the existing dietary scales, expenditure on Home Assistance, etc; as the ratepayers are obviously unable to meet the claims made upon them, and if the spending Boards and Committees do not live within the money which the Council is able to get from the ratepayers, it is obvious that the Institution must become useless and it is equally obvious that it is better for the poor that the Institutions restrict their expenditure, then that they should close altogether. The situation is now so serious that effective action must be taken....
ORDERED "Inform the Finance Committee of the County Council that in the opinion of the Committee, there is no waste in connection with the administration of the Central Hospital; that so long as the Committee is in charge of the Institution, they must provide facilities for the maintenance and medical treatment of the sick poor; that the dietary scales are far from being framed on a lavish basis – on the contrary complaints are frequent that patients are not receiving enough food. If it is the considered opinion of the County Council that too much money is being spent on the medical services in the County - Hospital and Dispensary – the Committee cannot agree, and if the existing services are to be curtailed or reduced, the County Council must accept the responsibility' (11 November, p2).
- The Medical Staff 'reported that the whole question of the election of House Doctors is in an unsatisfactory state. Since the necessity arose to employ a House Surgeon and a House Physician, the Medical Staff have repeatedly suggested the propriety of having the final recommendation in this matter, as it is most important both as regard the comfort of patients



and the good name of the Hospital, that the very best talent be secured for these position. The House Surgeon can either make or mar the reputation of any Hospital, and the Medical Staff therefore having in mind the fact that their recommendations have frequently been entirely disregarded, would like to have it clearly understood that any responsibility for complain arising through carelessness of House Doctors must be on the shoulders of those who elect them...' (11 November, p4).

- '...occasionally it happens a patient arrives at the Hospital late at night, and a bed may not be available. Sooner than turn such patients away from the Institution, two patients may be accommodated in one bed, but for one night only...' (11 November, p4).

5. 13 January 1926 - Includes:

8 December 1926 'Mr _____ o f Shanaglish wrote to the Matron, forwarding balance of a/c due for Hospital maintenance, and stating he can never forget the kind and skilful attention which he received from the Nurses an Medical Staff during his stay in Hospital' (10 February, p10).

- 'The Medical Staff inquired if the committee will sanction the installation of new lights for the Operating Theatre at an approximate cost of £52.10.0, as the existing lights are useless' (14 July, p8).
- 'The Committee spent a considerable time going through the various replies, reports from County Councillors, Home Assistance Officers etc, and decided that the following amounts should be remitted as uncollectible, and that the names of the other patients with whom they were unable to deal for want of sufficient information, should be referred to the Superintendent Assistance Officer for a report...' a list of patients and the amount remitted followed (13 October, pp2-5).
- 'SEWER FROM HOSPITAL Secretary reported that this sewer was originally constructed and paid for by the Board of Guardians, but of recent years, several private dwelling-houses have been connected with it. He suggests that the Urban Council should take over charge of same' (13 October, p16).
- 'The Head Nurse, in a covering letter stated that she regretted having to bring before the visiting Committee, matters that appear so trivial. She has been appointed Head Nurse in the Central Hospital, but unlike the Head Nurse in a Dublin Hospital, she is dealing with trained Nurses, and had not the advantages of dealing with those Nurses when they were on probation. She has anything but a pleasant or easy task to perform and t is quite obvious that there is at present, a well0founded idea in the Nurses minds, that they, as trained Nurses, should not be amenable to ordinary discipline. Nurses consider that any impertinence may be indulged in, so long as an apology is tendered afterwards. All she can hope to do is to given an order, and if same is not carried out, or if the Nurses concerned carry out the order with a preliminary show of impertinence, to report the matter to the Medical Staff. Unless she can show that her authority is definite and that failure to obey orders in a proper manner results in



serious trouble for the people concerned, she fails to see how the work of the Institution can be properly carried out' (10 November, p7).

- 'Secretary reported that the names of certain dispensary districts in this County are at present very misleading. For instance, a letter recently addressed to Killan Dispensary was returned by the P.O. authorities, as the place was unknown. This particular district should be known as "Kilconnell", which is the name of the village in which the Dispensary is situate, and where the M.O. resides. ...' (10 November, p20, see also GC6/6, 9 February 1927, p17).
- 'MAINTENANCE OF PATIENTS
The Superintendent Assistance Officer submitted reports on 170 cases investigate since lat Meeting, and the following amounts were remitted on his recommendation...' (8 December, p2).
- '...letter sent to the Nursing Council requesting them to give a definite reply as regards the recognition of the Fever Hospital as a Training School for Nurses without further delay, as the committee are not prepared to proceed with the Scheme for General Training unless Fever Training is also included. At the same time the Committee would like to point out that the Fever Hospital was recognised theretofore as a training school for Nurses in connection with the Scheme adopted in the Old Galway Hospital although at that time the Fever hospital only catered for patients from the Galway Union, whilst now it caters for the patients of the entire County. The Committee therefore cannot understand why the Nursing Council should have any hesitation in recognising the hospital as a Training School for Fever Nursing' (8 December, p5).
- 'INSPECTOR'S REPORT ON CENTRAL HOSPITAL From Local Government Department....
"The general condition and administration of the Central Hospital, the Maternity Hospital and Fever Hospital is good, but the distempering and painting of walls and corridors is urgently needed if the Institution is to be kept as a first class Hospital. ...
The alternations in the old "infirmary block" are approaching completion and will provide accommodation for nurses, probationers and maids. The best way of arranging for the different classes is not an easy matter. With regard to sleeping accommodation nurses and probationers are entitled to a certain amount of privacy, if only by means of curtains. They require an easily accessible box-room and wardrobes for their clothes and other belongings...' (8 December, p11).



Closed until 2027: names of unmarried mothers and identity of putative fathers given, & Doctors & patients alignments

6. 12 January 1927 - Some minutes are annotated with a stamp indicating they were approved
14 December 1927 by the County Galway Board of Health.

Includes:

- 'Dr C O'Malley, Honorary Secretary of the Medical Staff verbally informed the Committee that the work of the Hospital cannot be carried out efficiently, owing to the shortage of nurses caused by resignations, having regard to the fact that a huge influx of patients has occurred since Xmas.
Order: "If the Medical Staff so recommend, the Matron is authorised to employ two temporary nurses at a remuneration at the rate of £75 per annum, with rations, such nurses to be dispensed with immediately their services are no longer required"' (12 January, p9).
- 'County Surveyor reported that [fire] escapes could be erected at each end of the Hospital building, for an approximate sum of £300' (12 January, p 12).
- 'Canon Davis P.P. Chaplin to the Hospital, reported that the names of all children born of unmarried mothers are furnished to the Parish Priests of their respective districts. It is very hard sometimes to get the correct address form the mothers of such children.
Order: "The Board of Health is requested to issue instructions that all waiting cases of unmarried mothers be retained in the County Home, Loughrea, until they are actually in labour"' (9 February, p8).
- 'That we hereby express our horror at the brutal murder of Mr Kevin O'Higgins, Minister for Justice and we tender to his widow and family, our deepest sympathy and condolence in this appalling tragedy... ' (13 July, p17).
- 'Secretary reported that he is not satisfied that the Hospital Records show correct information as regards the patients treated in the Hospital, for the reason that in several instances, the dates of Admission and Discharge as shown in the Matron's Register, do not agree with the dates shown in the Medical Weekly Return which is kept by the Head Nurse, and the Admission and Discharge books which is kept by the Storekeeper. The latter Books is evidently written up from the Medical Weekly Return. It is impossible to say which of the Books are the more accurate, and it would be advisable to arrive at some system whereby mistakes of this nature would be avoided in future' (10 August, p10).
- Clonbur Dispensary district: 'Mr D Cooke, Agent for Lord Iveagh inquired if it is the committee's intention to appoint a Nurse for the district in place of Nurse Brehaney, who was paid, and is now being pensioned by Lord Iveagh. If a Nurse is appointed, Lord Iveagh will be prepared to contribute toward her salary... ' (12 October, p16).
- Letter from the Department of Defence in reply to a Committee resolution regarding unmarried mothers, where the Department point out 'that apart from the moral aspect of the question the only action open to the Department in this matter is to make a deduction from the pay of the soldier concerned, to be applied towards the maintenance of his illegitimate child, provided that a Court Order has been made for such maintenance. In case of moral delinquencies, a soldier



cannot be punished no more than a person not a member of the Forces' (9 November, p7).

- 'Medical Staff submitted requisition for an artificial leg and foot for _____, cost £17.17.6, and an artificial arm and hand for _____, cost £14.14.0' (9 November, p8).

CLOSED

7. 11 January 1928 – Some minutes are annotated with a stamp indicating they were approved
15 December 1928 by the County Galway Board of Health.

Includes:

- Regarding Abbey [Loughrea]Dispensary, 'Dr Walsh reported that the residence is badly in need of painting internally. She is now in residence 3 years and the walls are the same as when workmen left.....' (13 June, p21).
- 'Visiting Committee recommended that the Post Office be asked to make a thorough overhaul of the telephone system, as the Medical Staff complain that on occasions, it is very indistinct; the Post Office also to be asked for an estimate of the cost of a separate line direct to the main building' (14 November, p7)
- 'From Local Appointments Commission LA/I/7/28, 17/10/28, stating that in making recommendations for appointments in the Gaeltacht special consideration is given to the knowledge of Ireland possessed by the candidates, and, as a General Rule, the commissioners regard a competent knowledge of Irish, oral ad written, as a necessary qualification for posts in the Gaeltacht. In present conditions, however, cases are bound to occur, especially in appointments requiring specialised knowledge, or a high professional or technical standard, where it is impossible to get a candidate who in addition to fulfilling these requirements, also possesses a knowledge of Irish sufficient to satisfy the Commissioners, and in such cases recommendations made, are subject to the terms of the Local Offices and Employments (Gaeltacht) Order, 1928, which provides that the persons recommended must, before expiration of 3 years, satisfy the Minister for Local Government, that he possesses a knowledge of Irish sufficient to enable him to perform his duties through the medium of Irish. Before making recommendations in such cases, the Commissioners have regard to any knowledge of Irish which the candidate may show, as well as to their ability to acquire a competent knowledge within the specified period. In appointments to districts not included in the Gaeltacht, the Commissioners invariably give preference to candidates who have a competent knowledge of Irish. The Commissioners will be happy in the case of appointments within the Board's jurisdiction, to include in the particulars furnished by them regarding persons recommended for employment, a statement as to the knowledge or Irish possessed by the recommended candidate. They regret, however, that they cannot supply information re qualifications of non-successful applicants' (14 November, p20).



- '...extracts from the annual report of Dr. W. Sterling Berry, consequent on his recent inspection of the dispensaries in the County and requesting Committee to issue necessary notifications on the matters therein referred....' (12 December, pp20- 32).

Closed

8. 9 January 1929 - Includes:
- 11 December 1929 - 'That the Urban District Council be informed that the committee resent in the strongest possible manner the insinuations made by a certain Member of the Urban Council, that the reports made as regards the shortage of water in the Central Hospital was not justified; that after full consideration of all the facts, the Committee respectfully inform the Council that unless a proper water supply is given to the Hospital a situation will arise when the Council may have cause to regret their neglect in this respect; that when it is alleged the Committee are not paying a sufficient rent for the water supply to the Institution, the Urban Council should remember the advantages accruing to the town by having the hospital situate therein; that it costs in the region of approximately £24,000 per annum to run the Hospital, and of this money at least 75% is expended locally; that in the course of a year thousands of persons from the rural area visit the Hospital for the purpose of seeing their friends, who are under treatment there, and each visitor must spend more or less in the town; that it should be remembered the Board of Health have other public Institutions in the County to deal with, such as the Children' Home in Tuam, for instance, where the water rent is only £30 per annum, although it is situate a quarter of a mile outside the Urban area; that the Committee would like to know how the water rent of £84 per annum paid by the Hospital compares with similar rent s paid by similar Institutions in Galway' (8 May, p9).
- 'Messrs Waygood-Otis wrote to say that their contract for the maintenance of the Lift as yearly one, from February to November and when they entered into the agreement they had also an inspection contract with the Great Southern Railway at the Railway Hotel, and it was on this account their charge was only £8 per annum for inspecting the Hospital Life, as the Railway Co. granted them free Railway passes. The Railway Co have now cancelled their inspection contract and they (Messrs Waygood-Otis) regret they are unable to continue the inspection at the Hospital at the old price of £8 per annum, the charge being now approximately £15...' (9 October, p11).



CLOSED

9. 8 January 1930 - Includes:
10 December 1930 - 'Secretary reported that the Board of Health at meeting on 23rd ultimo, re-appointed the outgoing members of the Committee for the ensuing twelve months' (4 August, p1).
- 'Submitted report of conference held between the representatives of the Hospital Committee and the Urban Council on 5th instant, at which it was unanimously agreed that a recommendation be made to both bodies for the erection of a Morgue in the Hospital grounds with a door opening on to the public road and another door opening on to the Hospital grounds, the cost of such morgue to be borne in equal share by the Urban Council and the Committee; the fittings in the present morgue to be utilized in the new one, and the Hospital Committee to maintain the new morgue when erected; the necessary plans etc, to be prepared by Mr Bnns, Burrough Surveyor, and Mr Emerson, Engineer to the Committee, same to be submitted to the Committee and Urban Council, in due course, for approval (10 September, p10).
 - Regarding the repair of Dunmore Dispensary Dr Cooke reported that 'the dispensary was put into repair by the landlord to his satisfaction, but the landlord finds it difficult to keep the rates out. If there is not a constant war wages against the rates and the holes kept closed the place will be infested again and the books eaten and the bottles broken' (8 October, p25).
 - 'That the Secretary's Estimate be adopted and a demand made on the Board of Health and Public Assistance for £37,340 to meet the Committee's requirements for the year ending 31st March, 1932.
(Mr O'Connor dissented on the grounds that no provision has been made in the Estimate for District Hospitals at Ballinasloe and Clifden) (12 November, p2).

**CLOSED**

10. 14 January 1931 - Includes:
9 December 1931 - 'Clonbur Dispensary District: The County Council wrote ...in connection
With the proposal to dispose of the lot of land at Leenane, on condition that the purchaser undertakes to erect a dwelling house and a dispensary residence on the site, and pointing out that the County Surveyor has reported on the matter. The board of Health should guarantee the permanent tenancy of the Doctor at a rent of £60 per annum, the tenant paying the rates. Asking the Commissioner's observations on the report' (11 February, p15).
- The Secretary of the Irish Nurses' Union wrote.... Asking that the salaries payable to Dispensary Midwives be placed on a standardise scale, and suggesting that the Midwives should be paid £52 per annum, rising by 2 yearly to a maximum of £67, this to be retrospective in the case of Nurses with long service. Many of the Nurses have only a bar pound per week and one at least has to pay 12/6d per week for lodgings. The Union need not stress the point of the hard work done by those Nurses, as they are sure the Commissioner recognises it. The Union ask for a living wage for them. Some get private cases but others do not and cannot exist on their present salary' (11 February, p18).
 - 'The Electricity Supply Board wrote....as regards the break down of the electric life in the Hospital, stating they have investigated the complaints previously made and they are satisfied that the voltage is not the cause of the trouble and they have written to the Insurance Company to this effect. Regretting the inconvenience and hardship inflicted on the patients and staff, but they can assure the Commissioner that the Board are in no way to blame in this matter. They cannot at the moment definitely state when the Central Hospital will be changed over to the supply from the high tension lines. When the Hospital is changed over, all equipment connected to the existing supply, and which has been in use, will be adapted or replaced by equipment to suit the new supply. It will be understood, therefore, that as the date of the change over is not fair distant, they cannot permit any further equipment to be connected with the existing supply that will not also be suitable for the new supply' (11 March, p9).
 - Letter from the Local Government Department regarding the purchase of an ambulance, where the Hospital wished to purchase a 'Dodge' ambulance, whereas the department advised 'Apart from the first cost of the Ford Ambulance supplied by the Official Contractors, the Department's experience is that it is by far the most economical as regards repairs and running costs. ...'
'This communication having been submitted to the Medical Staff, they again pointed out that the Dodge Ambulance would be more suitable. Furthermore, they are of opinion that it is absolutely essential to have an extra seat provided alongside the driver for use of the Nurse, as it would be most unfair to lock a Nurse in an Ambulance on the outward journey for a patient, perhaps a distance of 40 or 50 miles, on a warm summer's day, and again to sit inside in the Ambulance with that patient on the return journey. It often happens that such patients are verminous, and no Nurse could be expected to sit constantly alongside such a patient' (20 May, p13).



CLOSED

11. 13 January 1932 - Includes:
14 December 1932 - 'The Secretary of the Mayo Board of Health wrote under date 21/12/31,
- Stating that Dr MacBride, County Surgeon, Castlebar, is drawing up a scheme for the training of Probationer Nurses and in order to enable him to put up a definite Scheme for approval, he would like to know exactly what the authorities of the Hospital in Galway are prepared to do. The arrangements that at present exist between the County Hospital, Castlebar, and the Drumcondra Hospital, Dublin, provide that when a Probationer goes for her final year's training to Drumcondra, she is replaced by a Nurse from the latter Hospital. Enquiring if it would be possible to have a similar arrangement in the case of Galway....' (13 January, p5).
 - 'TOYS ETC FOR CHILDREN Matron reported that Mrs Bell, St. Mary's Terrace distributed toys to the children at Xmas, and Mrs Berry, The Nook and Mrs Lenihan, Eyre Square, sent sweets. "Convey thanks"' (13 January, p11).
 - 'Submitted letter from Galway Urban Council regarding the manner in which Home Assistance is given, and pointing out that unnecessary hardship is placed on the people by having to travel long distances and wait long periods, also that unnecessary publicity is introduced in to the distribution of the money and tickets' (13 January, Dispensary Districts p15).
 - Includes a list of equipment purchased for Hospital out of Bazaar Fund, and a list of equipment purchased for the Hospital out of the private fund administered by the Matron and Secretary (10 February, pp7-9).
 - 'Surgeons M. G. O'Malley and R. B. Mahon applied for increased remuneration for their work in the Central Hospital as they consider their present salaries are totally inadequate. The surgical work of the Hospital has increased enormously in recent years and is still increasing. During the first quarter of the present year about 250 major operations have passed through their hands.In fact, they (Surgeons) are receiving a salary of £150 a year each for a greater amount of work than men in other counties who are paid £1,000 a year or more. They consider that a salary of £550 a year each would be reasonably and certainly not excessive' (13 April, p3, see also 8 June 1932, p3).
 - 'HOSPITAL RE-CONSTRUCTION ACCOUNT "Secretary reported that the total receipts from the Bazaar Fund amounted to "2805.7.6 out of which equipment to the value of "2791.7.1 was purchased for the Central hospital, leaving a balancer of £14.0.5 which has been lodged to the credit of the Hospital Equipment Account...."' (3 April, p11).
 - 'HOSPITALS SWEEPSTAKES Mr Cullen, Architect, notified that he would call on 30th April, with plans and report on proposed new Hospital' (11 May, p9).
 - 'PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF HOSPITAL IN TUAM It was decided to ask the Bon Secour Sisters in Tuam to re-consider their views regarding the establishment of a Hospital in Tuam for unmarried mothers' (11 May, p10).
 - 'TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS Visiting Committee directed attention to the fact that 4 wards in the Hospital are occupied by this class of patient, owing to the delay in erecting the addition to



the Sanatorium' (8 June, p8).

- 'DECORATIONS FOR EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS. Visiting Committee recommended that a sum of £5 be expended in decorating the Institution' (8 June, p9).
- 'Secretary reported that the cost of sending patients to extern Hospitals has increased from £19.7.0 for half-year ended 30/9/29, to £172.7.10 for half year ended 31/3/32' (14 September, p 10).

CLOSED

12. 11 January 1933 - Includes:
- 13 December 1933 - 'BED-HEAD CHARTS Visiting Committee recommended that charts be not removed from the wards until 2 p.m. each day, and that when the necessary records are made in the books, the charts be returned to the wards on same evening (11 January, p4).
- 'TEA Tea Taster reported on samples sent for test, from which it appears there is a slight variation in leaf, but as liquor and flavour are up to standard, it is recommended to buy. In future there should be no variation in any particular, in order to avoid rejection' (10 May, p9).
 - 'The Radiologist wrote...stating a Deep X-Ray Therapy installation is urgently required in the Hospital, as at present it is impossible to treat deep seated malignant disease or deep seated organs adequately. The approximate cost of the smallest deep Therapy Plant with all its accessories would be about £1,000. The latest most powerful type would cost about £4,000....'
"Commissioners approve of the purchase of a portable X-ray set at an estimated cost of £200 to £300; also the other equipment as set forth in the special requisition, subject to sanction of L.G.D...." (13 September, p8).
 - 'MOYCULLEN That the Engineer be instructed to prepare plans, specification and estimate for the erection of a Dispensary residence at Moycullen, at a cost of £600, and a Dispensary at a cost of £160, or a total expenditure of £760 on buildings, etc; that the rent to be charged to Dr MacHale for the residence be £30 per annum, to which Dr MacHale, who was present at the Meeting, agreed;...' (13 September, p16).
 - 'Resolved. 'That we, the Commissioners of the County Health Board of Galway, at a Special Meeting called for the purpose of this 9th day of December 1933, hereby authorise and direct our Secretary to invest £50,000 of the monies paid to us out of the Hospital's Sweeps for the erection of a new Hospital in Galway, in the Fourth National Loan, in five blocks of £10,000 each' (9 December, p1).

**CLOSED**

13. 10 January 1934 - Includes:
19 December 1934 - 'That we again request the Local Government (Trade) Department to sanction the purchase of a Bedford Ambulance. Only quite recently the Ford Ambulance broke down and it is quite apparent that it was not at all value for the money paid for it as compared with a Doge or Bedford Ambulance. Further, as the conveyance of patients to Hospital is now practically confined to stretcher cases, the Commissioners consider that the Ambulances should be the most comfortable possible, and the Medical Staff are satisfied that a Ford does not comply with these requirements' (14 February, p14).
- Diphtheria outbreaks in General Hospital '...Returns showing that from the 1st January 1933, to date, twenty-four patients suffering from diphtheria were transferred from the General Hospital to the Fever Hospital, and in addition sixty-five as suspected carriers were also transferred...' (9 March, p8).
 - 'Resolved 'That Mr Cullen (architect) be directed to carry out the Commissioners instruction authorising him to employ Messrs J. P Tierney & Co. as Consultants in connection with the electrical installation in the new Hospital' (9 March, p13).
 - '...the Minister sees no necessity for a resident Engineer in connection with the erection of the new Hospital buildings and he is not prepared to approve of the employment of a resident engineer on these works' (13 June, p11).
 - 'That Councillor E. Corbett e appointed Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year' (25 July, p1).
 - 'That we beg to convey to Mr Sean O'Kelly, Vice-President of the Executive Council and Minister for Local Government and Public Health, our sincere sympathy on the death of his wife' (25 July, p4).
 - '...a Company known as the Turf Development Board, Ltd., 10 Hume St., Dublin has been set up whose function will be to encourage the production and consumption of turf throughout the Saorstat; that this Board has set up in most of the turf producing district Co-operative turf Societies and these Societies should be fostered to the greatest possible extent by local bodies by making arrangements to order their turf supplies through the Turf Development Board, who in turn will arrange for delivery from the local Co-operation Societies' (22 August, p13).
 - Secretary notified having received on 1/8/34, £1,112.10.0, first divided on £50,000 invested in the Fourth National Loan, and same has been lodged to the credit of the Committee' (22 August, p16).
 - 'Heard a deputation on behalf of the Stonecutters' Association, requesting the Committee to Arrange to have at least portion of the new Hospital erected in Stone. The Chairman informed the deputation that when the plans are being prepared, the matter will receive careful consideration' (17 October, p11).
 - 'From Local Government Department circular...stating a Post-Graduate Course for Midwives will be held in the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, from 8th to 13th October, 1934 and Midwives in the employment of Local Authorities should be encouraged to attend such courses' (17 October, p24).



14. 16 January 1935 - Includes:
- 21 December 1935 - 'CLIFDEN DISTRICT HOSPITAL Submitted file of correspondence and instructions of the Board of Health that the Hospital and Dispensaries Committee arrange for the staffing of the Hospital and the purchase of the necessary equipment' (16 January, p12).
- INISHBOFFIN 'That Dr Thomas Joseph Ryan be and is hereby appointed as Medical Officer of the Inishboffin Dispensary District, at Salary of £250 per annum, increasing by £5 per annum to a maximum of £300 per annum, with £10 a year as Medical Officer of Health, subject to the provision of the Local Offices & Employments (Gaeltacht) Orders, 1928-32' (16 January, p16).
 - 'OVERCROWDING IN HOSPITAL Matron reported that the Institution is very much overcrowded. There are 20 patients lying on stretchers on the floor' (20 February, p12).
 - 'That the following scale of salary and conditions be fixed for the position of Clerk in the Committee's offices, rendered vacant by the resignation of Mr Carter:-
SALARY - Male - £150 per annum, by £61.13.4 per annum to £250 per annum
- Female - £120 per annum, by £5.0.0 per annum
...that the position be pensionable, but if a female is appointed, she must resign on marriage' (17 April, p2) .
 - Dr D. V. Morris, Gynaecologist, Etc., reported an extra nurse is urgently required in the Maternity Hospital, as the number of admissions is increasing rapidly, 100 patients having been admitted from 1st January, 1935, to date, as compared with 52 for the corresponding period in 1931. The work of the Nursing Staff is excellent but they cannot cope with the increasing numbers without extra help and the percentage of difficult cases required attention is markedly increased' (15 May, p4).
 - 'It was decided that no further Probationers be admitted for at least two years, as the Committee are of opinion that the nursing Profession is overcrowded, with the result that Nurses already trained are unable to get positions in their own country' (17 July, p 12).
 - 'Surgeon M O'Malley wrote stating that as the Hospital is left without any form of heating for eleven hours out of the 24 during the coldest part of the day, recommends that some sort of appliance for heating the Operating Theatres be provides, such as an electric radiator' (21 December, p7).



15. 18 January 1936 Includes:
19 December 1936 - 'That this Committee are prepared to abide by the decision unanimously arrived at by representatives of the Urban District Council and the hospital and Dispensaries Committee, which was understood to be a final and definite settlement of the question, viz., that the water rent shall be at the rate of £200 per annum as from 1st April, 1936, and that, subject to sanction, the arrears shall be paid to the Urban Council on this basis for the past two years, which amount to a total sum of £232. It was distinctly understood that the meters were to be removed from the mains' (18 April, p10).
- 'Matron reported that the General Hospital is at present very over-crowded; that there were 248 patients on 13/5/36, whilst the number of beds is 210, cots 14 and stretchers 9, leaving 15 patients to sleep on the floor; that the total number of patients in the Hospital in all Departments today is 302' (16 May, p18).
 - 'The Galway Urban Council wrote requesting that that New Hospital be built in limestone' (19 September, p14) (*See also* GC6/16, 15 May 1937, p14).
 - 'The Queen's Institute of District Nursing in Ireland reported they are prepared to appoint to Jubilee Nurse for the Barna area of the Galway No. 2 Dispensary District, provided the committee contributes a subsidy of £70 per annum and that a satisfactory residence is secured for the Nurse in Barna' (19 September, p23).
 - Letter from the Local Government Department stating 'it would be desirable if the Board of Health and Public Assistance could arrange to acquire from the Galway Urban Council a sufficient area of land around the site to improve the amenities of the proposed new Hospital, and suggesting that the Board and the Urban Council should call a conference to make arrangements in the mater...' (17 October, p14).
 - 'In regard to the proposed Dispensary at Gort Workhouse, Mr Sweeney, C.E., reported that the proposal is to convert the premises at the Workhouse recently occupied by Mr P. Hartigan into a Dispensary and waiting-room (space available 35' x 17' approx) – the Dispensary to be out off from the waiting-room by a partition. There is a fire-place available. A fair amount of overhaul improvement and repair work is required to roof, floor, windows, doors ad walls (17 October, p24).
 - 'Dr O'Beirne, Co. M.O.H., reported that, after consultation with Dr Burke, they are both of opinion that a re-arrangement of districts of the Jubilee Nurses in the Lettermore Dispensary District should be made as early as possible. The appointment of a Nurse in the Lettermullen area makes the work very much lighter for the Nurse at Bealadanga, while the Nurse in Carraroe has an extensive area. They suggest that Thoureen be transferred from the Carraroe to the Bealadangan Nurse's district, as this would appear to even up matters' (19 December, p27).

**CLOSED**

16. 23 January 1937 - Includes:
- 18 December 1937 - Includes list of all Dispensary midwives in the County and their proposed increase in salaries (23 January, p38).
- '(SECOND VISITING PHYSICIAN) From Local Government Department...in regard to the proposed appointment of an additional physician for the Central Hospital and stating the Minister adheres to the decision already conveyed to the committee that the person appointed should have complete control of the hospital wards under his charge, and not be under the supervision of the existing physician. Pointing out that there has already been considerable delay in connection with the appointment of an additional physician to the staff of the hospital and requesting that application be made to the Local Appointments Commissioners without further delay requesting them to recommend a candidate for the post' (17 April, p2).
 - 'That the Lady Dudley Nurse, who acts as Dispensary Midwife in the Spiddal District, shall be paid at the same rate of salary as the other Lady Dudley Nurses, via., £52 per annum, subject to the approval of the Local Government Department' (15 May, p25).
 - Includes report from Dr Fallon, Visiting Physician, to Mr Gallagher, Secretary to the Board of Health, on the T.B. cases admitted to the hospital but not through the County Medical Officer of Health's offices, detailing their name and case details (19 June, p13).
 - Details of furniture purchased for the new Nurses' Home (19 June, p16).
 - 'Head Nurse reported that no attempt has been made to rectify the dampness on the walls of the (Clifden) Hospital and the matter needs immediate attention before the damp weather comes; that the walls were never painted and there are several cracks needing attention; that the windows rattle with the least puff of wind' (19 June, p25).



17. 22 January 1938 - Includes:
17 December 1938 - 'That the visiting days remains as heretofore, viz., Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, from 2 to 4 o'clock, p.m., and that no visitors within radius of 10 miles of Galway be admitted to the Institution, except in cases of extreme urgency, except on the days and between the hours mentioned. In the case of visitors from a distance of 10 miles or over, the Matron to arrange for their admission on any day during reasonable hours, and that a notice be issued in the public press regarding the days and hours for Visitors' (22 January, p12).
- 'The town Clerk, Galway, wrote requesting the Committee to appoint representatives to forma conjoint Commissioners for the purpose of discussing the question of the erection of a morgue (19 March, p11).
 - 'Submitted resolutions adopted by the Irish Nurses' Organisation requesting that all Nurses employed in County Homes and Institutions under Local Authorities be allowed an initial salary of £90 per annum, rising by £5 per annum to £150 per annum, with ration allowance of £21/- weekly, 3/6d laundry and £5 per annum uniform allowance; that temporary Nurses get holidays after twelve month's service and that Nurses doing alternate night duty in Hospitals be paid £20 per annum more than those who do not do night duty' (18 June, p5).
 - 'Storekeeper reported that he did not sell the horse at the last Fair in Galway as he could not get the price he expected for same. He, however, purchased a horse for the sum of £23.10.0.' (18 June, p10).
 - With regard to the Nurses' Homes with Local Government Department advised 'no objection will be raised to the purchase of the following items:-
One statue of Saint Patrick for the grounds: Dressing Chests from Messrs O'Dea in substitution for the articles on the Official Contract List already sanctioned: small tables at £1.4.0 each: Two twelve fireside chairs at £1.10. each: 12 oak chairs upholstered in moquettee at £1.1.0 each' (16 July 1938).
18. 7 January 1939 - Includes:
16 December 1939 - 'Submitted letter from His Lordship, the Bishop of Galway, making a formal request to have the Nuns working in the Central Hospital relieved from the duty of collecting from patients monies to be paid to them for Hospital maintenance, etc, and pointing out he is convinced that this would increase the usefulness of the Nuns to be the Hospital and to the patients, especially the Catholic patients. The ministrations of the Nuns will be more effective and acceptable if they are not entangled in financial matters which are little consonant with the vocation of a Nun' (21 January 1939, p2).
- '..there is no objection to the acceptance of the tender of Messrs. J. McNally & Co. for the supply and erection of granite base for Statue of St. Patrick in the grounds of the Nurses' Home, at £30.0.0' (18 March, 1939, p17).



- Report on the condition of the Dispensary in Eyrecourt the Medical Officer reported that 'in addition to the wretched condition of the floor, the walls are quite damp and fires are utterly inadequate; that a boarded floor would be a great improvement, but it would not leave the dispensary in a satisfactory condition...that she (M.O.) considers it time to get a proper dispensary and suggests that the Committee advertise for suitable premises' (18th March, 1939, p46).
- '..in regard to the proposal to appoint an additional permanent surgeon for the Central Hospital, stating the Minister observes that the number of operations in the Hospital during the year 1938 was 911 and that only 98 of these were performed by Surgeon Mahon. The latter's age is given in the return of officers as 76 years and this is probably the reason for the small share of surgical work done by him. Pointing out that it is unusual for a professional man of such advanced years to retain a post calling for the skill and activity required by a hospital surgeon, and, in the circumstances, the question of Surgeon Mahon's retirement on pension might be considered' (20 May 1939, p5).
- 'The Galway Branch of the Irish Transport and General Worker's Union wrote protesting against the delay in proceeding with the erection of a new Central Hospital at Galway, and requesting that a statement be submitted, for the information of the general public, as to (1) the cause of the delay, and (2) the present position as regards the preparation and approval of the plans and other contract documents' (22 July 1939, p19).
- 'RESOLVED:- That the salary of the position of Midwife of the Lettermore (Lettermullen area) Dispensary District be fixed at £52 per annum, subject to the approval of the Local Government Department; that when sanction is received, the necessary statutory request to be sent to the Local Appointments Commissions' (22 July 1939, p42).
- Letter from the Local Government Department regarding probationer nurses stating that 'at the time the question of the acceptance of these girls for training in the Central Hospital was under consideration the committee was anxious to have the age limit for Probationers reduced to 18 years and the Department had refused to sanction the proposal. When the scheme for admission of these girls was submitted a condition thereof was that the lower age limit should be 18 years, and the Department's letter of 27/10/37 referred and agreed to that condition. As the Rules for Probationers in the Central hospital stipulate that uniform is provided after three months, the Minister considers that an exception should not be made in the case of these girls....' (18 November 1939, p5).
- 'LADY DUDLEY NURSING SOCIETY. Secretary directed attention to the fact that the Committee and the Board of Health are contributing towards the funds of the Lady Dudley Nursing Society almost £1,000 per annum, yet they have no representation' (16 December 1939, p37).



19. 20 January 1940 - Includes:
- 21 December 1940 - Mr T. J. Cullen, Architect, reported that he has been working for the Past nine years on the plans for the proposed new Hospital, during which time he has prepared seven schemes; that he has had no payment since 1932 and as his out-of-pocket expenses, he would be obliged for a further cheque for £5,000 on account of fees' (p20).
- BALLINASLOE DISTRICT HOSPITAL. County Solicitor reported that the lands purchased as a site for new Hospital are now the property of the Committee and eh transmitted Conveyance and Memorial to Register for sealing. He suggested that the Engineer should mark out the site by lock splitting and that plans may now be prepared for the erection of the Hospital and fencing of the plot' (17 February 1940, p31).
 - 'The Chairman and Secretary of the newly-formed Irish Soldiers' Aid Committee came before the meeting and explained that a number of temporary Nurses employed in the Central Hospital had volunteered their services during the emergency. The Committee in question asked for a guarantee that after the emergency had passed, these Nurses would be given preference for any temporary work that might be available. They further requested the same guarantee in the case of dispensary doctors who had given their services to the Soldiers; Aid Committee' (20 July 1940, p5).
 - Letter from the MO of Renmore Barracks, Galway stating it proposed 'to make use of the Hospitals under the control of the Board of Health for the treatment of any casualties that may occur among the Troops operating in the area during the emergency' (20 July 1940, p 14).
 - 'Secretary reported that there are at present 283 patients in the Hospital and approximately 111 intern officers and employees, or a total of 394 persons in the Institution. There has been no reduction in the number of admission to the Institution, notwithstanding the several appeals addressed to the Dispensary Medical Officers and the Visiting Medical Staff of the Hospital. Should an emergency arise, it will be absolutely impossible to have such a large number of patients evacuated to their own homes' (3 August, 1940, p1).
 - 'Dr Mona Cooke was, therefore, declared appointed as temporary Medical Officer of the Renvyle Dispensary District, at remuneration of £5.0.0 per week and travelling expenses at the rate of £40 per annum...' (3 August 1940, p4).
 - 'That Eamonn Corbett be re-elected as Chairman for the ensuing year' (17 August 1940, p1).
 - 'County Secretary submitted a list of places selected by a Committee appointed on behalf of the Irish Red Cross Society which might be used as civilian hospitals in case of emergency, and pointed out that in making the selections the Committee had regard to the buildings which the military propose to take over as military hospitals and to the desirability of having the auxiliary hospitals spread evenly throughout the County and where bedding would be readily available.' (17 August 1940, p13).
 - 'In response to advertisements, only one tender was received for the supply of Rabbits to the Central Hospital, namely, The Hollybrook Farm Produce Co., Church Street, Claremorris, who offered to supply dressed Rabbits at 7d, per lb' (21 December 1940, p29).

**CLOSED**

20. 18 January 1941 - Includes:
- 20 December 1941 'Galway Board of Health and Public Assistance at meeting on 8th instance were informed on behalf of Dispensary Medical Officers that although serious influenza epidemic throughout County they cannot attend patients owing to shortage of petrol – several Doctors got no coupons for current month' (15 February 1941, p 23).
- 'Secretary reported that he was informed by the Storekeeper on 31/5/41 that there is not petrol available for the Ambulances. A permit was asked for 350 gallons for the month of May, but only 272 gallons have been received. No Ambulances are, therefore, available in case of an emergency' (31 May 1941, p1).
 - 'Inform the Matron that, in view of the present difficulties of travelling, visitors to patients who come long distances should be admitted during reasonable hours' (21 June 1941, p17).
 - 'The existing Maternity Hospital is to be maintained during construction of the new Maternity Hospital but portion of it (i.e. the North Wing) will have to be demolished before completion of the new block. When the new building is completely finished the old Maternity Hospital is then to be demolished. The existing Dispensary is to be re-erected South of the existing Maternity Hospital as its present position interferes with the completion of the new Maternity Hospital. In this way the work of the Dispensary may be carried out until such times as the Main General Hospital is completed' (31 May 1941, p25).
 - 'ORDER – "Point out to Architect and Local Government Department that if at all possible, it would be advisable not to demolish the Maternity Hospital until after the new Hospital has been erected, as during the construction all the accommodation available in the existing Maternity Hospital will be urgently required for patients and staff in place of the existing portion of the old Hospital which may be demolished. If, however, it is essential that the buildings should be demolished previous to the construction of the new Hospital the Committee will not raise any objection"' (31 May 1941, p26).
 - '...a Post Graduate course for Midwives will be held in the National Maternity Hospital, Holles Street, Dublin, from 22nd to 26th September next, inclusive, and Midwives in the employment of Local Authorities should be encouraged to attend such courses (16 August 1941, p26).
 - 'Committee are prepared to co-operate with the Minister in the proposed scheme for the training of girls from the Fíor-Gaeltacht in Nursing, and will continue to accept four candidates in each of the next four years. The Committee, however, required the Minister to sanction an increase in the total number of Probationer Nurses to be employed in the Central Hospital from 45 to 50. It will be necessary for the candidates nominated by the Minister under the Fíor-Gaeltacht scheme to sit for the prescribed educational examination, with the other candidates, which examination will be held at an early date' (20 September, 1941, p8).
 - Letter from the Local Government Department regarding the 'proposed acquisition of a site at Kililmore for the erection of a dispensary residence for Eyrecourt Dispensary District, and stating that as suggested by the Engineer the question of selecting an alternative site adjacent to the line of the proposed new water main should be considered.....' (20 September 1941, p48).



21. 17 January 1942 - Includes,
8 August 1942 'The Medical Staff submitted a letter from the Irish Nurses' Organisation drawing attention to the present acute unemployment of Nurses, and pointing out that, in the opinion of the Organisation, the only solution for it would be that the training schools would take a much small number of candidates for some time to come, and that at the present moment they would employ more trained staff' (28 March, 1941, p5).
- 'The Stonecutters of Ballinasloe have to again ask your help in connection with the proposed New Hospital at Galway. It was been reported to us that the stone which is going to be used is to be granite and not limestone, which we were appealing for since the start of our effort to have stone dressing on this building. Now the Stonecutters of Ballinasloe has asked me to point out to you that if the stone used on this building is to be granite it will be no benefit to the Stonecutters of Co. Galway, as there are no granite stonecutters in Co. Galway. Consequently, Stonecutters will have to be got from Co. Dublin or Wicklow which I feel sure you will agree with me would not be fair to the Stonecutters of Co. Galway who have anxiously waiting for this work to start....' (28 March, 1942, p21).
 - Includes a detailed a preliminary general report on the engineering services for the proposed new Regional Hospital from the engineers, J.P Tierney & Co (16 May 1942, pp20 -32).
 - The architect advised that 'the material for terrazzo pavings etc., will not be imported and the Galway marble chippings will be used in making the terrazzo; that when the time arrives, he will invite the necessary quotations for the work' (18 July 1941, p17).
 - Chief Clerk advised that there 'is no cement for the Maternity block contract, and that to avoid closing down the work, supplies must be released...' (8 August, 1941 p13).
22. 17 January 1942 – Printed copies of the minutes.
8 August 1942
- 13 pamphlets



B. Matron's Register of Patients Admitted & Discharged from Galway Central Hospital, 1930-1932

Closed

23. 1 December 1930
28 June 1932
- Pre-printed volume with hand-written details recording date of admittance and discharge or death, name, address, age, religion, occupation, marital status, doctor's name, disease from which patient is suffering, such as tonsils, chest tumour, ankle injury, eyes, gall stones, glands, also classification e.g. surgical, fever, and name and address of nearest relative.

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C. Abstract of Accounts, 1924 - 1942

24. 30 September 1924,
30 September 1929 -
31 March 1944
- Printed volume with summary details of revenue and expenditure for each half year, includes for instance, details of revenue account, statement explanatory of revenue account, statements of balances, abstract of number and classification of patients treated, state of cash assets and liabilities, and of insurance of property against damage by fire, and statements of names and salaries of several officers, such as the Secretary, Storekeeper, Matron, Compounder, surgeons and specialists, nurses, the gatekeepers, the laundress, dispensary staff and so on.

c. 300pp