THE SWEDISH BED-STATE

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In view of the paucity of reliable civilian statistics with respect to hospital accommodation requirements, my friend Professor Lancelot Hogben, F.R.S. has suggested that a brief statement of the most recent data separately available for Sweden as a whole and for Stockholm might prove serviceable to Regional Authorities responsible for the implementation of the new National Health Service in Britain. Those exhibited in the ensuing tables refer to all classes of institutional treatment *other than psychiatric cases*. They therefore exclude patients in mental hospitals and in establishments for the mental defective. They also exclude inmates of institutions for inebriates.

Table I, which cites beds available in all classes of institutions with the reservation stated above, refers to Sweden as a whole for the year 1944, at the end of which the total population of the kingdom was 6,597,348, including in all 860,268 married women of child-bearing (under 45 years) age and 1,398,388 children under 15 years of age. On the last day of the year, the total number of beds *available*

TABLE I
SWEDISH BED-STATE, 1944

Institutions	No. of beds equipped on the last day of the year	Mean daily no. occupied throughout the year
General hospitals ..	21,073	20,390
Cottage hospitals ..	1,691	1,666
Wards in charitable institutions ..	1,845	1,623
Private nursing homes ..	1,117	1,026
Children's hospitals and sanatoria ..	2,617	1,427
Fever hospitals ..	6,746	4,659
Tuberculosis institutions ..	9,104	8,066
Homes for incurable sick ..	5,966	5,350
Miscellaneous other ..	975	890
Lying-in hospitals ..	2,940	3,066
Total	54,074	48,163
Total excluding maternity cases	51,134	45,097

TABLE II
STOCKHOLM BED-STATE, 1944

Beds available for	Municipal institutions		Other major establishments		Total	
	Beds available on last day of year	Mean daily no. of beds occupied	Beds available on last day of year	Mean daily no. of beds occupied	Beds available	Mean daily no.
Medical (excluding those cited below) ..	1,212	1,136	698	632	1,910	1,768
Surgical (ditto)	796	723	686	641	1,482	1,364
Tuberculosis	884	724	—	—	884	724
Children's diseases	155	113	231	207	386	320
Infectious diseases	707	484	—	—	707	484
Ophthalmic	40	23	82	51	122	74
Ear, nose, and throat	83	74	89	76	172	150
Women's diseases	155	157	197	205	352	362
Venereal diseases	320	259	87	75	407	334
Neurological cases	—	—	80	66	80	66
Chronic sick	1,585	1,365	190	187	1,775	1,552
Orthopaedic	76	46	171	168	247	214
Radium treatment	11	10	138	135	149	145
Maternity cases	395	363	132	140	527	503
Total	6,419	5,477	2,781	2,583	9,200	8,060
Total, excluding maternity cases ..	6,024	5,114	2,649	2,443	8,673	7,557

TABLE III
MEAN MONTHLY NUMBERS OF BEDS OCCUPIED IN MUNICIPAL HOSPITALS—STOCKHOLM, 1944
(*maxima* in italics)

Medical units for	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Average 1944	Beds available	Ditto per 1,000 popn.
Internal diseases ..	1,253	1,272	1,298	<i>1,306</i>	1,295	1,158	1,009	994	1,134	1,196	1,239	1,196	1,196.6	1,312	2.10
Neurological cases ..	13	15	20	19	16	16	13	8	12	19	27	17	15.8	31	0.05
Surgical cases ..	839	<i>878</i>	828	803	792	770	682	700	753	813	844	773	789.4	959	1.58
Neurosurgery ..	27	25	30	28	27	24	22	26	30	29	31	26	27.1	28	0.04
Women's diseases ..	149	158	<i>163</i>	156	154	134	127	131	152	160	157	127	147.6	155	0.31
Ophthalmic cases ..	23	26	23	24	23	24	9	15	24	27	25	18	21.7	40	0.11
Ear, nose, and throat ..	72	77	76	71	77	75	44	49	69	74	74	68	68.8	83	0.16
Veneral diseases ..	279	289	<i>291</i>	261	255	206	200	188	238	273	270	241	249.3	320	0.49
Radium ..	6	11	10	11	10	10	10	11	10	11	11	10	10.3	11	0.06
Children's medical ..	213	220	203	204	202	178	146	134	194	215	229	214	195.5		
Children's surgical ..	35	34	30	38	36	28	21	33	24	31	32	29	31.0	311	0.47
Infectious diseases ..	423	465	479	<i>510</i>	473	427	310	295	364	473	454	439	425.9	707	1.08
Orthopaedic cases ..	47	49	49	40	40	31	33	35	47	52	66	63	46.0	76	0.12
Surgical tuberculosis ..	57	57	64	65	69	69	65	62	66	67	68	65	64.7	62	0.09
Phthisis ..	642	610	593	590	627	662	702	702	683	677	694	681	655.0	822	1.26
Chronic sick ..	1,785	1,800	1,813	<i>1,819</i>	1,757	1,760	1,688	1,663	1,670	1,681	1,717	1,754	1,741.8	1,585	2.42
Maternity cases ..	291	308	358	332	348	356	336	329	350	358	356	340	339.1	455	0.69
Total ..	6,154	6,294	6,328	6,277	6,201	5,928	5,417	5,375	5,820	6,516	6,288	6,061	6,025.6	6,957	11.03

per thousand total population was 8.2. The corresponding mean daily figure of beds *occupied* is 7.3. For further reference it may be well to specify that the figures cited for general hospitals exclude wards for special classes of patients (children, maternity, tuberculosis patients and convalescents) budgeted in special institutions as indicated thereunder.

For Stockholm available figures distinguish more explicitly between number of beds available for and occupied by different types of cases, as exhibited in Table II. The estimated city population on the last day of the year (1944) was 654,864, of which 95,563 were married women of child-bearing age and 107,222 children under 15 years of age. The figures for beds available (at the end of the year) and mean daily number of beds occupied are respectively 14 per thousand and 12.3 per thousand,

if we take the city population as the true population at risk. However, we have to bear in mind that the middle columns, referring to establishments (state and private) other than municipal hospitals, include provision for patients *not* domiciled in the city.

Against the background of information relating to age and incidence of diseases, breakdown of cases in Table II provides some guidance for action elsewhere, if vital statistics of the age structure of the populations at risk are to hand. Any estimate of a safety margin between beds equipped and number constantly sick must also take stock of seasonal fluctuations; and it is possible to make such a breakdown of the figures for Stockholm, as shown in Table III. The figures in the latter do not include 330 cases referable to two hospitals which have not furnished statistics, but are otherwise complete.