

### Relapse of Mental Patient Can Be Predicted

Chicago (Science Service) — Whether a patient discharged from a mental hospital will need to be re-admitted within the next five years can be predicted with the use of a standard psychological questionnaire, David J. Gouws of the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh, told a meeting of the American Psychological Association here.

In fact Gouws found three such questionnaires that could serve as such a psychiatric crystal ball. The first was a selection of 52 questions from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, or MMPI to psychologists. This 52-question scale, known as the "Ps scale" was originally developed to measure probability of success of shock treatment. The second was a scale developed to measure the adjustment of military personnel. The third was a kind of "yes-man" measure, 24 items also selected from the MMPI to measure "acquiescence."

**Regardless of Treatment**  
The three scales, Gouws found, could be used to predict the probability of relapse regardless of the type of treatment used, whether insulin or electric shock treatment or general hospital supportive care, including individual psychotherapy.

The fact that the three scales predict improvement regardless of the type of treatment would seem to indicate that what the scales measure is not so much responsiveness to shock treatment as it is of a general characteristic, or group of characteristics, which has been called "propensity to improve."

Another use of a psychiatric interview scale was described to the meeting by Drs. Donald R. Gorham and John E. Overall of the Veterans Administration Central Neuropsychiatric Research Laboratory at Perry Point, Md.

These psychologists developed a short scale that could be used to reveal changes in the symptoms of patients after taking one of the tranquilizers.

Approximately 80 patients were given each of six different kinds of treatment. They were evaluated before and after treatment.

A short scale of only nine questions was found to be reliable for indicating the results of various treatments on the patients symptoms and is recommended by the investigators for future research of this kind.



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