

LOCAL "MUTUAL HELP" SCHEMES IN INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC

The Minister of Health (Mr. Henry Willink) has asked local authorities to do all they can to help homes which are in difficulties as the result of influenza and shortage of household and nursing assistance. He has suggested that any health visitors, school nurses, first-aid post and rest centre staffs, members of youth organisations and voluntary workers who are available might be organised in local "mutual help" schemes. Where this can be done, the Medical Officer of Health will tell local doctors and district nurses what assistance can be supplied for cases which come to their notice.

The British Red Cross Society, the St. John Ambulance Brigade and Women's Voluntary Services have informed the Minister that their members will give all the help they can, on a request from a doctor, district nurse or hospital. Medical Officers of Health in areas where influenza is prevalent have been asked to get in touch with the local branches of these organisations and work out details of the arrangements.

Other problems for households where there is sickness, with no relative or neighbour available to lend a hand, are shopping - on which the local youth services might be able to help - and meals. The Board of Education and the Ministry of Food have agreed that where possible, meals may be sent out from school canteens and British Restaurants.

What can be done in the way of "mutual help" and meals depend on the circumstances and resources of each area. Local arrangements will be made known locally.

+++++

MINISTRY OF HEALTH