

General Practitioner Museum in Florida

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Family medicine has a very long tradition.

In the USA, for example, until the middle of the XX century, almost all doctors were engaged in general practice. This meant that they treated all diseases without restrictions stemming from a particular type of pathology, age, or gender differences of patients. During the XIX - early XX century, a similar situation was typical for the countries of Europe and Russia. In Heritage Village, near St. Petersburg in Florida, there is an open-air museum, the exposition of which includes the office of a family doctor along with other exhibits - the evidence of the life of immigrants, lovingly preserved by their descendants. There are residential and agricultural production buildings, churches, a railway station, a blacksmith shop, a manufactory shop. The museum of the family doctor's office is in excellent condition, its visit and excursion service are free of charge. It is a two-storey wooden building with all the rooms for receiving and serving patients. According to the concept of family medicine at the beginning of the XX century, the tasks of the doctor were: to help patients and their families throughout their lives; to treat patients and take measures to preserve their health; to ensure the availability of all types of medical care to most people at any time of the day, and the patient and his family members were perceived as a whole, and the doctor himself - as a direct guarantor of the well-being of the whole family. The general practitioner did everything: delivered babies, performed appendectomies, provided help with fractures, relieved the suffering of dying- he treated colds, rheumatism, pneumonia - all diseases. However, in those days there was no one else to help people in case of illness. There were very few narrow specialists, they could only be found in large cities. Thus, the social significance of the general practitioner was enormous. Thanks to the versatile training and the skills received, the doctor carried out early diagnosis of diseases (when their manifestations are still nonspecific) and started treatment in a timely manner. However, one important detail should be taken into account: according to the American immigration law- At that time, only healthy people were allowed to enter the United States. In the hallway (waiting room) on the 1st floor of the museum, there are comfortable chairs and armchairs, as well as a set of usual means of care and ease of movement - crutches, wheelchairs, stretchers. Here the visitor also found information about the payment of medical services. On the 1st floor there were rooms for the reception of numerous patients. Since the family doctor received men and women of all ages with different diseases in his office, he was methodically armed with the latest word sciences and practices of that time. Separate desks with diagnostic equipment were located behind the screens. These are instruments for therapeutic examination, ophthalmoscopy and otoscopy, a dental chair with the necessary instruments. In a separate office there is a shadowless lamp, instruments for surgical aids, as well as a steam sterilizer. The total number of devices and instruments presented is about 200. Separately behind the lead door is a universal X-ray machine. It should be emphasized that the family doctor conducted preventive examinations. - they, followed their growth, development and general condition. He treated acute diseases of young patients - not only easily occurring, but also severe; in addition, he provided necessary assistance to children with chronic pathology, for example, with diabetes. Therefore, in one of the offices there is a table with small scales and a pediatric set. The family doctor also dealt with gynecological, obstetric problems, delivered babies, and also attended expectant mothers from the moment of determining the period of pregnancy

to delivery, and then took care of them and newborns in the postpartum period. A gynecological chair is installed behind the screen and there are accessories for urethral examination, enemas. Because the doctor served people who came to America from all regions of the planet, he had to possess the basics of psychological knowledge, which helped him in the fight against smoking, alcoholism and drug addiction. On the 2nd floor, you can get acquainted with the dispensary cabinets and laboratory and instrumental diagnostic tools of that time. In cabinets with pharmacological agents from mercury to white clay, the visitor will see there are about 30 bottles with lapped stoppers, laboratory scales, vessels for grinding and mixing medicines. At the very beginning of the diagnostic department there are tables with sets for chemical and microscopic examination - for blood, urine, and feces tests. The following is an electrocardiograph with string recording on photographic film and all the necessary devices for decoding an electrocardiogram. And, finally, in a separate room - physiotherapy treatment devices used at that time: a device for darsonalization, kits for thermal procedures, mainly for paraffinotherapy, and a miracle of that time - a device for light therapy. In case of problems with the cardiovascular system, the patients looked at the green light, in case of respiratory diseases - at the blue light, and in case of pathology of the gastrointestinal tract - for about 10 minutes they fixed their gaze on the light guide emitting yellow light. The staff of the general practitioner included 2 nurses and 1 nurse. The doctor, his family and a person permanently resided in buildings located next to the office.

As for the payment of medical services, we will give the following- prices of 1915, presented in the hallway in the form of a separate plate (it should be noted that the services of a doctor cost a lot):

1. Extract and manufacture of medicines according to a standard prescription - 1-2 dollars.
2. Time-consuming examination - 3-5 dollars.
3. Admission of permanent patients - 2-3 dollars.
4. Visit from 21.00 to 6.00h - double payment.
5. A single visit without treatment control - 5 dollars.
6. General blood test - \$ 5.
7. Microscopy of sediment (urine, feces) - 2-5 dollars.
8. Quantitative urine analysis - \$ 10-25.
9. The patient's stay in the clinic during the procedures are paid additionally: for 1 hour - 3-5 dollars.
10. Initial home consultation visit - \$10-25.
11. Follow-up home visit - 3-5 dollars.
12. A visit to an infectious patient is an additional (extra) payment.
13. Anesthesia for 30 minutes - \$ 5.
14. 2 patients in 1 house - an additional 50%.

The doctor had not only to provide medical assistance to patients regardless of their age, gender or the nature of pathology, but also to involve specialist doctors if necessary. Therefore, in the hallway on a special sign, there is information for patients referred to the vacham at Mound Park Hospital St. Petersburg (about 20 miles from this place).

The price list (1920) is as follows:

1. Ward for 4 beds - \$ 15 per week.
2. Private room - 30-45 dollars per week.
3. Delivery room - \$5 per day.
4. Payment for the work of a nurse provided by the hospital is \$ 4 per day.
5. A personal nurse provided by the hospital -\$ 7 per week.
6. The use of operating rooms - 5-10 dollars.
7. Maintenance of bedridden patients - \$ 5.
8. Receipt for urgent indications - \$ 5.
9. Individual anesthesia in the room for living - \$ 5.

There is also an announcement: "Upon admission to the hospital in any ward, prepayment of all services is strictly necessary. Patients should clearly understand that \$15 a week is inadequate compensation for conditions in the ward. Persons occupying a separate room should take into account that the payment for the ward does not include payment for the doctor's work. The hospital is not responsible for the results of medical activity and for medical treatment." After viewing the exposition, questions arise: really did all this really happen? was 1 doctor able to provide all diagnostic and therapeutic care even to a limited (400-500 families) number of residents? And only the silent evidence of that time allows us to answer these questions in the affirmative.

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