

~Call For Papers~

Food and Hospitals: an historical perspective

Brussels, Belgium, 26-27 April 2013



*Hosted by the University of Birmingham (Brussels campus)
and the Free University of Brussels (VUB),*

Sponsored by the Society For Social History of Medicine



While contemporary grumblings about hospital food have become the quintessential hospital complaint, it is undeniable that a clean, warm bed, rest and the provision of food and drink, rather than medicines and therapies have always greatly increased hospital patients' chances of recovery. Indeed diet has from the time of Galen been a central part of medical therapy. However, even if central to the day-to-day routine of hospitals, workhouses and asylums, food and drink continue to be overlooked in historical accounts of hospitalisation. This conference aims to foreground the role of food and drink in health care institutions in the past.

Food and drink were crucial to hospital and asylum expenditure from medieval to modern times, not unusually comprising one half of medical institutions' annual budgets. Drink and diet naturally varied with country, region and locality. The organisers of this conference are interested in exploring broad geographical perspectives and associated fads, prejudices and phobias. The acquisition, preparation and use of foodstuffs were also managed by diverse groups, sometimes lay or clerical, as well as medical, including doctors, nurses and dieticians. Dietary needs and preferences of patients also varied with age, gender, race and religion, while meals were often augmented or restricted in line with diagnosis and discipline. Views concerning the role of food and drink in recovery also shifted significantly, both in earlier centuries, and more recently with the rise of the nutritional sciences.

The Advisory Board of the INHH, as organisers of this conference, wish to invite proposals for 25-30 minute papers on any aspect and era relating to the history of food, drink and institutional medicine. Abstracts should be between 200-300 words in length and will be received until 30 April 2012. A programme, featuring an address by Professor Peter Scholliers (VUB, Belgium), will be advertised in June 2012.

We welcome abstracts on any of the following themes:

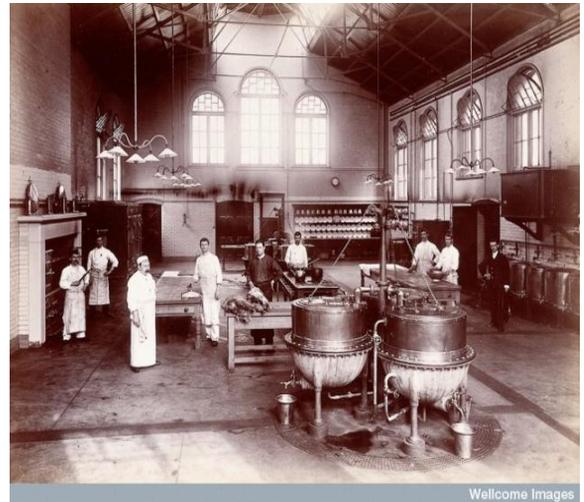
1. TREATMENT: DIET & MEDICINE

• Theory

The role of diet and medical theory
The psychology of food and food choice
Food as medicine; medicine as food
Food and religion: daily bread and the sin of gluttony

• Practice

Dietary restrictions and punishments
Artificial and forced feeding
Alcohol and medical therapies
Water, wine and other dietary liquids
Nutrition and malnutrition
High diets, low diets and milk diets
Infant feeding and nutrition
Meat eaters versus vegetarians
Food for convalescence, weight gain and obesity



2. SUPPLY

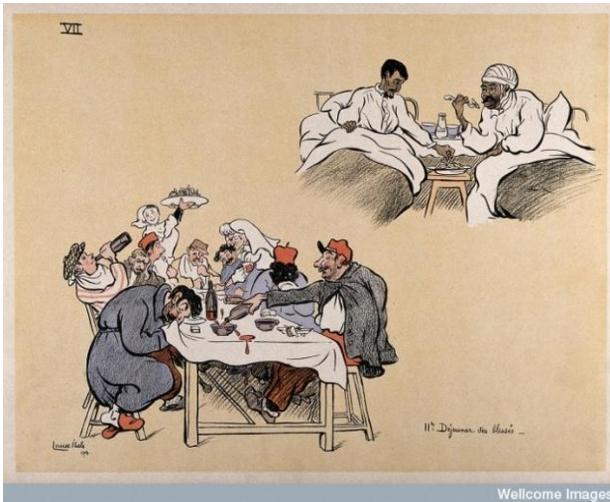
The procurement and purchase of food
Waste, resistance and food smuggling
Hospital gardens, farms and work therapy
Food production and local economies
Theft of provisions and food crime
Food and philanthropy
Rationing, shortages and inequalities

3. PREPARATION

In-house preparation and distribution
Food for patients versus food for staff
Wells, vineyards and hospital breweries
Hospital kitchens and their technologies
Spaces of food preparation and consumption
Investigating quality and improving food

4. FOOD AND DISEASE

Food-related disorders and diseases
Hospital nutritionists and the science of food
Hospital medicine and food metaphors
Toxins, poisoning and contamination
Allergies, additives and adulteration
Hunger, starvation and famine



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