

MEDICINE

Group Practice Favored

Young doctors now in the armed services desire group practice of medicine, recent American Medical Association poll is said to reveal.

► SIGNS that the young doctors now in the armed services favor group practice of medicine are seen by Dr. Kingsley Roberts, director of Medical Administration Service, Inc., in a recent American Medical Association poll.

The A.M.A. poll consisted of a questionnaire mailed to 3,000 medical officers on duty with the armed forces. The officers were selected by pulling every fifteenth name from an alphabetical record list of all medical officers on duty with the Army, Navy, Public Health Service and Veterans Administration as of Sept. 30, 1943. Results of the first 927 returns received by June 1 of this year were reported by Lt. Col. Harold C. Lueth, liaison officer with the American Medical Association.

Besides questions on general information, the questionnaire covered medical education, industrial medicine, licensure and practice, and economic considerations, according to the report in the *Journal*.

"A majority of all physicians answer 'Yes' to the question of whether or not they would like to become 'associated in private practice' with an organized group of physicians," states Dr. Roberts in his own report on the poll which appears in *Medical Care*, a journal concerned with present and postwar problems in medical-social economics.

"The figure is 54% among the youngest men and 57% in the 25-42 age group. This," Dr. Roberts declares, "makes it clear that many of our doctors

in uniform recognize, through practical demonstration, the trends within medicine which make solo practice no longer either the best or the most economical kind of service for the physician or for the patient.

"The returns show that our doctors, young and old, don't want, after the war, 'to pick up where they left off' before it," Dr. Roberts continues, referring to a statement by "one elderly editor of a medical journal" not otherwise identified. "It is clear that a great many of them want something different."

On this point the returns as published in the *Journal* give the numbers wanting general practice, specialty practice, practice with a group of physicians, teaching, and so on, but do not show specifically whether the choices represent a change from the type of practice the doctors were engaged in before the war. Many of the younger men, the A.M.A. report points out in another connection, went directly into the armed forces from hospital service. In other words, they had not yet started any kind of practice. The returns do show, as Dr. Roberts points

out, that many of the younger men want more education after the war.

"The returns do not mean," Dr. Roberts states, "that solo practice is going out by 1950 or that government practice is sweeping in. However, they do mean that the official leaders of medicine must now utilize a more realistic guide as to where they should lead."

It is the over-50 group of doctors which now runs medical societies and tries to shape medical opinion, Dr. Roberts contends. He questions whether "these elderly minds" will try to give the under-40 physicians what the younger men and many forward-looking older men want for the future. The fact that a poll of the younger men is being conducted might, of course, be given by the A.M.A. as its answer to this question.

"If fuller returns from this and subsequent questionnaires bear out the first 927 replies," Dr. Roberts points out, "the lay public as well as the doctors will have a foot rule with which to judge the responsiveness and the competence of these official leaders of the profession."

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Radio reception varies with the phases of the moon, according to a Massachusetts Institute of Technology authority; it improves from the time of the moon's first quarter to shortly before full moon, and again from about the moon's last quarter until a few days before the new moon.

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