



obituary

Dr Norman Kaye

Formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, Carlton Hayes Hospital, Leicestershire

Norman Kaye was a consultant psychiatrist in Leicestershire, based at Carlton Hayes Hospital, from 1965 until his retirement in 1988.

Born in London on 28 March 1926, of Central European Jewish parents, his early life contained much sadness which bred in him a notably stoic quality: 'this is the situation in which I find myself, this is where I have to survive'. Tall, elegantly dressed, always good-mannered and good-humoured, an image which in some ways belied his beliefs, Norman was a zealous supporter of those who have difficulty fending for themselves, particularly the chronically mentally ill. With those who could fend for themselves, he would listen attentively to their point of view and argue vigorously against it, mostly because he just relished the discourse.

At the age of 14, following 7 years in Norwood Orphanage School where he had received a sound but restricted education lacking both science and languages, Norman attended Coopers' School where his interest in science first developed. He graduated from the London Medical School in 1950 and in 1951 did his house jobs in the Connaught Hospital, Walthamstow, and St Alfege's Hospital, Greenwich. He then worked in hospitals in the London area before being called up in March 1953. In the RAF he worked for 2 years, interestingly, as a trainee specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation, the latter role eventually becoming central to his working life. Following national service, he worked in



neurosurgery at the Brook Hospital between 1955 and 1956, caring, *inter alia*, for post-leucotomy patients. He moved to Leeds to work in neurology but again found himself caring for long-stay psychiatric patients. It was in 1958 that Norman accepted that his career would be in psychiatry, starting as a JHMO at Scalebor Park. This was followed by a senior registrar post at Graylingwell Hospital, then in the vanguard of the development of community services, and thence to the consultant post at Carlton Hayes Hospital.

Norman Kaye's contribution to psychiatry in Leicestershire was considerable. Of course, he worked throughout his consultant years as a general psychiatrist but it was his rehabilitation work that was most significant. Long before there were rehabilitation psychiatrists, Norman was one. He brought back into the community half the long-stay patients from the old mental hospital. But this was no ruthless decanting. Every patient was meticulously

assessed, re-housed and vigorously supported, sometimes by the development of novel posts such as a 'boarding-out officer' or by direct psychiatric support to a local housing association. Activities such as these are commonplace now, but they were not when Norman implemented them in Leicestershire.

A committed teacher, Norman was one of two clinical tutors in Leicestershire who organised postgraduate training in psychiatry from 1966 to 1978. He was also active in the development of undergraduate teaching in the new University of Leicester Medical School, and was even willing to lecture on psychiatry at the University School of Social Work, which at that time often involved defending his profession against the accusation of being merely an agent of social control.

He was elected Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1980 and served as a Council member and as Chairman of the Midlands Division. Between 1978 and 1982, he took on the role of convenor of approval panels for the Midlands Division of the College, responsible for Wessex, the South West and Scotland: not a role for making friends but certainly one for influencing people.

In retirement, pursuing his lifelong interest in music, spending time in the south of France and travelling further afield (including an enlightening historical tour of Israel) was not enough. Norman enrolled as a university student and got a master's degree in philosophy, another lifetime interest. He died after a long illness on 23 June 2008, at the age of 82, and is survived by his wife, Pat, and his daughter, Nicki.

Douglas Cameron

doi: 10.1192/pb.bp.108.024232