

# Family Medicine . . . An Old Style Reborn

By PAT PETRASKE

The jack-of-all-trades general practitioner is on the rise again taking his place among the giants in the medical profession, the specialists. Gone is the image of the gray-haired gent dispensing cure-all liniments. The "g.p." is now providing personalized medical care entwined in community development.

Soft-spoken and sporting a fluffy Afro, Dr. Richard Adler, is one such general practitioner whose health care facility on 74 Frost Avenue promotes the practice of "family medicine." He believes that members of a family prefer going to the same doctor, "one they can get to know as a doctor and a friend."

"It is important to get to know the people as a family unit. The interaction among family members can cause psychological problems which are just as important as physical ones," he said.

## An official cutting of the Missionary Expelled from Rhodesia

**Bulawayo, Rhodesia [RNS]** — A Roman Catholic missionary priest, Father Xavier Lopez, 35, who has worked in Rhodesia for 10 years, has been deported from the country under a government order.

Before taking a flight here to Johannesburg, South Africa, on June 19, Father Lopez told newsmen he did not know why he was being deported, because, he said, the authorities had given no reasons.

The missionary is a member of a Spanish order of secular priests who maintain 15 missions in the Wankie diocese in the eastern border area with Zambia.

"adhesive tape" by Mayor Stephen May launched Adler's practice that in six weeks has grown to include 200 or more patients. The third ward, divided approximately in half racially, has been without a doctor for several years.

Most of the people simply have not been going to a doctor or have had sporadic emergency hospital visits. The gamut of problems possessed by those who have never been seriously treated are being handled by Adler himself who sees 20 patients in an average 12-hour day.

He is in the process of training an all-around office assistant.

Adler is a native of Brooklyn and a graduate of the Free University of West Berlin.

Unusual medical problems are cropping up among his patients, he finds. Anemia is prevalent among the young children and gonorrhea is more in evidence in Adler's area than among people who live in the suburbs. There is also a high percentage of girls aged 14 and 15 who have children out of wedlock. Obesity and high blood pressure may be linked to poor dietary habits.

Ignorance is not bliss among his patients for it is the basic lack of knowledge that contributes to many of these problems. A prescription to treat a baby's ear infection was left unfilled for several months because the young mother was simply not used to getting medical care for her child.

Adler plans to set up group therapy sessions to discuss common problems of sex, marriage and children and to work in conjunction with social agencies for additional counseling aid.

The concept of "open practice" differs from the traditional idea

of medicine. "It is basically helping the people learn about themselves and becoming involved in the community and its health problems. For example, I'd like to see the youngsters become health watchers for their families," explained Adler, who will take his concept to PTA meetings, principals and students through a series of lectures.

Merging his practice into the area was basically peaceful although his office was broken into and rocks were thrown through his huge front window. Adler feels this vandalism is due to "social disintegration." Many of the area residents are socially, economically and educationally disadvantaged.

"The kids usually act on the spur of the moment; hostility and boredom are two factors contributing to their behavior.

They've never had a set of values; you can see that by just looking outside at the rubbish along the streets," he said.

Adler expressed frustration at the lack of follow-through on basic health instruction which he gives his patients. Frustration is also felt financially since half of his patients are on welfare and "once in a while someone cruises by with a payment."

However he feels the area is improving rather than deteriorating. A basic hindrance is that the people find it hard to assume responsibility because they've "never dealt with things like credit and installment plans that the middle class takes for granted." His practice includes not only the innercity third ward but the 19th ward where many middleclass blacks and whites live.

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