

Colliery Medical Practice

1921

The conditions of medical practice under contract terms with the various Miners' Medical Associations of the West Coast of New Zealand have never been satisfactory. There is consequently almost a constant state of friction between the doctor and miners' committee, and no doctor stays very long, the position becoming impossible.

There is at present trouble at Denniston, where the conditions of service seem very unsatisfactory. In addition to an inadequate salary (which is the same as before the war), a bad climate, and limited social facilities, the present chief complaint is the condition of the house provided under the agreement, which in the words of the present occupant,

“is in unspeakably bad repair, while the surgery and dispensary (so-called) are in such condition that no self-respecting medical man would consent to work in the for any length of time.” The salary is £330, plus £200 as Hospital Medical Officer.

The authorities should make the conditions of medical service more satisfactory and attractive in these districts, which are, at best, the least pleasing of practices from the doctor's point of view. Only thereby will good men be attracted and induced to stay, and miners want the best medical service obtainable, whether in case of accident to themselves or of illness of their wives and children.

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