

New Zealand Army Nursing Service

The Hon. Minister of Defence has given authority for the formation of the service under conditions approved by the Defence officers and finally passed in Cabinet.

The number of the Service is 110 nurses under the Matron-in-chief, and from that number the 50 nurses accepted by the Army Council have been selected.

Of the twenty sisters which form part of this complement one is to act as assistant to the Matron-in-chief and to hold the temporary rank of matron while on active service. This matron will remain in charge of the contingent during their term of service for the war.

Ten more of the sisters will accompany the contingent and the remaining nine will be on active service either at the hospital at Samoa, at the hospital at Trentham camp or on the reserve ready to be called up if necessary.

One sister will carry out the duties of the Matron-in-chief while she is absent from the Dominion.

The rules for the Service are printed below. Forms of application are being printed and also attestation and other forms for those who are to be enrolled for active service. Nurses have to sign on for service for the duration of the war, and until they are brought back to New Zealand or otherwise discharged. It is, therefore no light undertaking, to which they have bound themselves. The whole of the members of the contingent will have the same status as officers in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, the rate of pay which commences from the time the members are directed to leave their homes or headquarters to report themselves in Wellington, is very fair; and compares more than favourably with the very miserable rate paid to nurses under the Red Cross at Home.

We are well pleased that nurses have not enquired as to their payment and have been content to leave it to the sense of justice of the Government, and advisers of the Government. In fact, we are sure that without grumbling or discontent the nurses would have cheerfully accepted much lower pay. This, however, would not have been a right course to recommend, as the value of their professional work should not be depreciated. Under the present conditions it will be possible for nurses to continue what they have

been doing very generously since the war started, that is, contributing to the funds for the relief of those who are suffering so intensely by the war.

NURSING SERVICE AND RESERVE RULES

Nurses to the number of 100 will be accepted as members of the above Service and Reserve, the object of which is to fulfil the purpose of a regular Army Nursing Service until such time as an amendment of the Defence Act will allow of the latter being formed as part of the Military Forces.

Members shall consist of Matron-in-Chief and four Matrons, being, if possible, the Matrons of the four chief hospitals of the Dominion, 20 sisters, and 76 nurses.

The positions of Matron-in-Chief and the four Matrons shall be honorary, unless, under special circumstances, any may be called upon for service apart from, and inconsistent with, their ordinary offices.

Sisters may be placed in temporary positions as Matrons in charge of Military Hospitals or expeditions.

Sisters may, under certain circumstances, be required to take temporarily the honorary positions of Matron-in-Chief or Matrons. Such sisters would be the members holding the positions of Government servants or on the staffs of the four chief hospitals.

Sisters shall be nurses who have held, or are holding, appointments as sisters in charge on hospital staffs. They must not be under 25 or over 45 years of age.

Nurses shall be registered nurses of the Dominion and shall have been qualified at least one year before enrolment. They must not be under 24 or over 40 years of age.

Members of the Service will have, so long as they can comply with the regulations hereafter to be gazetted under the Defence Act, the first right to promotion in the New Zealand Army Nursing Service.

Members shall, as far as possible, be nurses trained in New Zealand, or native born New Zealand women.

Members shall hold themselves in readiness to fulfil any duties in time of war which the Director of the Medical Forces, or the Matron-in-Chief may require, provided that for service outside New Zealand only voluntary service will be required.

They shall report to the Matron of their district any change of address, and shall, at all times, keep in touch with her.

They shall attend any course of lectures or instruction which may be given in army nursing or camp work by the medical staff of the Defence Department or others, provided they are within a reasonable distance of the place where such instruction is given.

The Matrons shall keep themselves informed of the whereabouts of the sisters and nurses in their several districts and be prepared to communicate with them at any time when required by the Matron-in-Chief.