Campus Health Centers

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Campus Health Centers

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter XXXVI,
ON THE SICK BRETHREN:

“Before all things and above all things, care must be taken of the sick, so that they will be served as if they were Christ in person…”

A history of the health benefits or health centers on the two campuses is yet to be written. Here are a few tidbits I could find in a limited amount of time. (The Rule was quoted in http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?CSBArchNews,343 “Is there a doctor in the house?” Feb. 19 1971 p. 3)
St. Gregory House

“Greg House” was built in 1907 as an infirmary for students, and named after its architect, Gregory Steil, OSB.

When it was first built, a solid brick wall divided the building in half so that the contagious diseases could be treated in quarantine.

The first patient was admitted on March 27, 1908. (from the building description on the SJU Archives website)
Greg House in 2006
1885 - First St. Cloud hospital, run by the nuns on 9th Ave. North [http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u7/SBM,58](http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u7/SBM,58) (St. Raphael’s hospital eventually replaced this one – it was also on 9th Ave. North.)
St. Cloud Hospital
The sisters went on to found this and many other hospitals.
Aerial view of St. Cloud Hospital, 1928 - [http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?SBM,980](http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?SBM,980)
St. Ben’s builds a separate student infirmary, 1903

“Because of its segregation from other buildings, it was ideal for isolating patients with contagious diseases; hence dubbed the "pest house."

A few years after it was built, more than 100 students and candidates were stricken in the diphtheria epidemic.
St. Ben’s Infirmary – still here today
This building still exists today. It was moved closer to Minnesota Street and renovated for use as the convent guest house.”
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?SBM,33
St. John’s hires Dr. William Davidson

Jump ahead about 50 years; St. John’s has hired a Physician, Dr. William Davidson, to teach Psychology and be the campus physician. In St. Joe, he works out of an office in the big house that’s next to Krebsbach Chevrolet – i.e. just east of today’s “Millstream Shops & Lofts.”
Dr. Davidson doctors SJU football team
“Doc lives in St. Joseph, the hot spot for amateur baseball in Central Minnesota. The local ‘Saints’ can look forward to ample material in the future, as five Davidson boys, one through six, are the beginning of what Doc calls ‘my family team.’

To house this active brood, he and his wife have been busy this summer completing plans for a new home which they hope will be finished next spring. It’s being built on a plot south of St. Benedict’s and is designed for ‘family living.’

Obviously, the doctor and his family plan to make the two local colleges and St. Joseph their home for some time to come.”

Davidson bought the land from the Sisters.
Dr. Davidson’s home at St. Ben’s
He would take patients from the campus in his basement health center.
(Hal’s story: When there to check something mechanical, he had to remove his shoes to walk on the roof!)
Health insurance debated

Even back then, health insurance for all was a debatable issue!
Davidson tragedy
He left the campus, and the area, after a tragic accident: their four-year-old son fell off the deck and was killed
(That’s the last mention of Dr. Davidson in the student papers, and, ironically, the next time the name “Davidson” appears is almost ten years later, when an October 1971 article mentions a football player named Ben Davidson.)
Joe O’Connell, CSB artist, sculpted the headstone for Benedict Davidson, in the St. Joe cemetery: Section 1, Row 7, Lot 114 in the NW section of the cemetery, 2nd row, near the cemetery road. Photo by the Archivist.
Dr. Higdon serves campuses in the late 1960s
• In the late 1960s, both campuses are served by Dr. Higdon (in Greg House and on CSB’s 3rd floor Main):
  • The reason that Dr. Higdon sometimes isn’t there on time is that he is in charge of all the monks and students of SJU as well as the sisters and students at CSB. He must be at the St. Cloud Hospital to assist whenever one of his patients needs an operation.
  • We are discouraged from going to the infirmary at St. John’s because there you have to pay for every visit to the doctor.
• In the 1970s CSB students are served by the St. Joe Medical Clinic, a few blocks from campus

“...the doctor is usually in the infirmary, located at the far end of the third floor in the Main building, from about 9 to 11 a.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.”

Care is covered by a $15 fee included in students’ room & board charge.

http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/1?CSBArchNews.195
Later changes

--In 1977 St. John's moves its health service out of Greg House and into the southeast wing of the Quad; Eileen Haeg manages it

--In 2009 St. Ben's establishes a student health service in a new space in the ground level of Lottie Hall.
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Compiled in February 2010 by Peggy Landwehr Roske,
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