Directory of History of Medicine Collections

Organization Name:	Health Science Libraries & Hamilton Archives Hartford Hospital
Organization Type:	Library
Address:	80 Seymour Street P. O. Box 5037
City:	Hartford
State/Province:	Connecticut
Zip/Postal Code:	06102-5037
Country:	United States
Telephone Number:	860-545-7276
Fax Number:	(860) 545-2572
Web Site:	
Online Catalog:	
Email Address:	
Other:	
Abstract:	The Hamilton Archives holds the records of the Hartford Hospital and the Institute of Living. Access to patient records is strictly prohibited. Access is by special arrangement with the Archivist who will request administration approval for access. Myth, Minds and Medicine: Two Centuries of Mental health Care, is a Permanent museum-quality exhibition that explains the dramatic changes that have occurred over the past 200 years in our perception and attempts at treatment for people afflicted with mental illness. It takes the viewer from a time when the mentally ill—thought to be possessed by evil spirits—were kept in chains and even cages, through the principles of "Moral Treatment" on which the IOL was founded, to more modern-day approaches that included such desperate measures as insulin shock therapy, a crude electroconvulsive therapy and lobotomy. The culmination of the exhibition is a look at present-day treatment and brain chemistry research that will lead to better forms of care in the future, aided by the display of a human brain. Myth, Minds and Medicine is the result of years of research conducted by historians hired through a grant The Institute of Living (IOL) received from the Connecticut Humanities Council. Documents, artifacts, items of interest, letters and old photos were gathered from the IOL's attics, basements and closed-up offices to form the basis for

	the exhibition. The decision was made early on to tell the full story of medicine's well-intentional but sometimes erroneous attempts at finding ways to alleviate suffering. The patients themselves tell part of the poignant story, as recorded voices recreate some of the letters found in the IOL' Archives. An entirely reconstructed patient bedroom from the early 1900's invites viewers to place themselves in the shoes of those who sought care at the IOL. Myths, Minds and Medicines is open to the public on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is designed to be educational and appeal to students. A curriculum is being developed to aid teachers in helping to dispel some of the myths as well as the stigma still attached to mental illness. Call (860) 545-1010 for more details or visit our website at: http://instituteofliving.org/Visitors_Area/myths.html. Photocopy machine is available for 15 cents per page. Not all materials may be photocopied. (Not available at Myths, Minds and Medicine). Interlibrary loan is available.
Holdings:	A small collection of old books from the late 1800's and early 1900s. One collection is of psychiatry materials at the Institute of Living Medical Library and one small nursing collection is at Hartford Hospital Health Science Libraries. Neither collection is cataloged. Access to either collection is by special arrangement with the Director of the Health Science Libraries.
Collection Subject Strengths:	History of Hospitals; History of Nursing; History of Psychiatry; History of Psychology
Other Collection Subject Strengths:	
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