



**HEARING A BOOK** — Mrs. Thomas Smith hears Mrs. Emma Williams explain the use of "talking books" (records and players) provided for the blind by the State Library for the Blind. Mrs. Williams is director of Social Service of the Re-

habilitation Department at Munson. Helping the Blind to enjoy the book, they like, as well as new books, is one of the unusual services of the Munson Medical Center's social service department. (Munson Photo)

## Munson's Social Service Dep't Offers Many Special Programs

Social service activities at Munson Medical Center are directed by Mrs. Emma Williams, a dynamic person with a vast amount of knowledge and compassion for those who need help of one kind or another. She believes the program at Munson varies from the usual interpretation of the words "social service" and emphasizes attention to the more personal needs of the people referred to

dictated a change of living situation for him. Boarding care was the only solution. A home was sought — and found — where a large garden can be planted in the spring and arrangements made for the patient's own small tractor to be moved to the new location for his use. John now feels much more contented about having to leave his own home. He is willing to try this unusual kind of boarding home where he can be given the care he needs and

backed wheelchair to move about in the hospital requested one for his personal use while at the hospital. There were not enough wheelchairs available for such an arrangement. Mrs. Wakulot, at the request of the patient's physician, went to work on this need. Finally she made arrangements with the American Legion to give such a chair. — the patient was happy to have his personal

chair during his long convalescence at Munson, and so were the worker and the Legion.

These are but a few examples of the unusual arrangements made for those who need personal help by the Munson social service department. "In addition to the usual social welfare activities it is the unusual medically related needs which we think set our work apart," Mrs. Williams said.

attention to the more personal needs of the people referred to her department by their doctors.

Mrs. Williams explains that these people are patients who no longer require hospital care but do need special services not considered in the category of social welfare.

There are patients who do need monetary assistance, medicines, home nursing, and perhaps even food and fuel. They are given full attention, and are referred to appropriate agencies. For the patients who are lonely, blind, elderly, convalescent or handicapped, whose needs are of a more particular nature, Munson's social service department has a more personal approach to meeting their needs. Each is interviewed prior to leaving the hospital and an effort is made to provide transportation, home nursing, equipment to facilitate their movements, companionship, reading materials, or if necessary a boarding home.

These are but a few of the needs of Munson's social service patients. The program embraces widely varied kinds of assistance some of which are discussed with Mrs. Eva Snyder, who directs the Home Care Nursing program at Munson, when continued nursing care is needed.

Mrs. Williams pointed out that during the past year her department, which consists of herself and Mrs. Richard Wakulat, her assistant, have made 391 home visits and taken care of 151 patients, including aid to the blind, loans of equipment, referrals to other agencies, arrangements for foster homes, help for the care of homes, transportation for patients needing treatments at the hospital, and the subsidizing of a number for speech therapy.

"Adjustments of all kinds must be made by the aged, the ill or the handicapped," Mrs. Williams said, "and this is where our social workers stand ready to give support to the physician requests, or suggest referrals to another agency better geared to their specific needs.

boarding home where he can be given the care he needs and the kind of life he loves. We truly believe, he will find contentment in this new arrangement."

Another type of service rendered by Munson's social service department is that of liaison agency between persons unable for physical reasons to read normally and the State Library for the Blind. The procedure for this service is, first, to secure certification from the patient's attending physician and then, through at least one visit with the patient, to learn his literary preferences. Both "talking books" (records and record player), large print books and Braille publications are available. Arrangements are made to borrow from the library either the "talking books" or those prepared in Braille for the patient just as regular books are. A few periodicals are also offered for the use of the sightless or near blind. There is no charge for this extension of library service and an index of current titles is available.

One of the many patients who avails herself of this service is Mrs. Thomas Smith, an 83-year-old lady who at one time gave music lessons in Traverse City. She and her husband now live in a comfortable home on West Bay Shore Road. Despite the love and attention of their five children, 16 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren, being home bound for most of the long winter months means some lonely hours for the Smiths. Mrs. Smith's sight no longer allows her to read, something she always loved to do. The social service department has arranged for a record player and "talking books" suited to her interests to be brought to her from the state library for the blind at regular intervals.

A patient needing a canvas