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Arthritis Conference  
Kansas City, Missouri  
January 19-20, 1975

CHARGE

THIS MONTH MARKS THE END OF THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE SPECIAL ARTHRITIS PROGRAM WHICH WAS INITIATED LAST FISCAL YEAR BY THE DIVISION OF REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAMS, A PART OF THE HEALTH RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION, DHEW. UNDER THE PROGRAM, A TOTAL OF 60 ARTHRITIS PROJECTS AFFECTING PATIENTS IN 36 STATES ARE BEING SUPPORTED BY 29 RMP'S FOR ONE YEAR IN THE TOTAL OF NEARLY \$4.5 MILLION.

THIS NEW PROGRAM HAS BEEN DESIGNED ON A DEMONSTRATION BASIS TO IMPROVE THE SCOPE AND QUALITY OF SERVICES DELIVERED TO PATIENTS WITH ARTHRITIS. IT IS PROVIDING EARLIER IDENTIFICATION OF THOSE WHO REQUIRE TREATMENT FOR ARTHRITIS DISEASES. IT IS ADVANCING EDUCATION FOR THOSE WHO EITHER PROVIDE OR RECEIVE TREATMENT, OR WHO ARE AFFECTED SECONDARILY BY THE ARTHRITIC PATIENT. ALTHOUGH FUNDED BY FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, THE PROGRAM HAS SOUGHT, AND RECEIVED GENEROUS COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF CONCERNED PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL ARTHRITIS FOUNDATION AND THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ORTHOPEDIC SURGEONS, WHO ARE CO-SPONSORS OF THIS CONFERENCE, THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAMS, THE INDIVIDUAL REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAMS, AND KEY INDIVIDUALS IN THE FIELD OF ARTHRITIS.

AN INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INITIAL AND CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PROGRAM WAS EXTENDED TO THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ARTHRITIS, METABOLIC, AND

DIGESTIVE DISEASES, AND AT THIS TIME I WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE OUR GRATITUDE FOR THAT INSTITUTE'S SUPPORT DURING THE INITIAL STAGES OF THE PROGRAM'S DEVELOPMENT.

¶ ASSEMBLED HERE TODAY, WE MAY WELL VIEW OURSELVES AS A HETEROGENOUS GROUP OF

ARTHRITIS PROJECT DIRECTORS,  
CONCERNED LAYMEN,  
HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS AND HEALTH SPECIALISTS,  
REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAM COORDINATORS,  
CONSUMERS,  
VOLUNTARY AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES, AND  
AT LEAST TWO INVOLVED FEDERAL OFFICIALS.

WHAT IS IT THAT WE WISH TO ACCOMPLISH IN THIS TWO-DAY MEETING? WHAT ARE OUR COMMON NEEDS? HOW CAN WE STRUCTURE OUR ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES OVER THE COMING MONTHS IN ORDER THAT WE MAY, TOGETHER, BENEFIT FROM EACH OTHER'S EXPERIENCES?

CAN WE NOT AT THIS TIME, THROUGH JOINT ENDEAVORS, BRING INTO BEING A COHERENT, COHESIVE, AND MEANINGFUL NATIONAL PROGRAM OF DEMONSTRATION ARTHRITIS ACTIVITIES WHICH WILL MEASURE UP TO ITS INHERENT POTENTIALS WHICH WE ALL KNOW IT TO HAVE? AS INDIVIDUAL DIRECTORS AND CONCERNED CITIZENS, YOU SURELY WILL SEEK FURTHER SUPPORT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WITHIN YOUR INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES. CAN WE NOT HERE COMMIT OURSELVES TO THOSE MEASURES AND ACTIONS WHICH INDIVIDUALLY, AND IN CONCERT, WILL REFLECT THE BEST THAT WE CAN PRODUCE, AND WHICH COMMAND THE SERIOUS ATTENTION OF THOSE WHO DIRECT THE RESOURCES FOR HEALTH, AND HEALTH CARE DEVELOPMENT?

AS CICERO SAID, "THE PUNISHMENT OF THOSE WHO ARE TOO WISE TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE AFFAIRS OF GOVERNMENT IS TO LEAVE THE AFFAIRS OF GOVERNMENT TO, AND THUS BE GOVERNED BY, THE UNWISE."

LET US NOT SHIRK, THEREFORE, THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS OURSELVES TO DIFFICULT ISSUES -- TO TAKE THOSE STEPS WHICH GOOD SENSE DICTATES ARE NECESSARY IF THIS SMALL, BUT POTENTIALLY VITAL NEW NATIONAL INITIATIVE, IS NOT TO BECOME JUST ANOTHER NOBLE FLASH IN THE PAN.

THE FUTURE OF THIS PROGRAM LIES IN YOUR HANDS. WE CONVENE FOR COMMON PURPOSES --- TO MEET ONE ANOTHER, TO MATCH OUR RESPECTIVE DESIRES AND OBJECTIVES, AND TO STRIKE A COMMON CADENCE TO SUSTAIN COORDINATED NATIONAL EFFORTS WHICH WILL ENRICH THE NATION'S HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEM.

WITH THE PASSAGE OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 1974, THE FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAM HAS BEEN CLEARLY DETERMINED, AND YOU MAY NO LONGER LOOK TO THIS PROGRAM FOR CERTAINTY OF CONTINUED SUPPORT. THUS, THE PRIME TASK OF THIS CONFERENCE IS TO BEGIN TO GENERATE, RAPIDLY, THE FORCES REQUIRED TO THRUST THE ARTHRITIS PROGRAM INTO THE NATIONAL VIEW THROUGH DEMONSTRATED ACCOMPLISHMENTS. YOU ARE THE VANGUARD WHICH CAN ACCELERATE THE NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HERETOFORE, LARGELY IGNORED ARTHRITIDES, WHICH ARE CALLED FOR UNDER THE NEWLY ENACTED PUBLIC LAW 93-640, SPONSORED BY SENATOR CRANSTON.

MANY INDIVIDUAL GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE WORKED DILIGENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY TO BRING FORTH THE CURRENT SMALL, BUT IMPORTANT PROGRAM, WHICH IS REPRESENTED HERE TODAY BY YOUR COLLECTIVE PRESENCE. ITS FUTURE, THOUGH UNCLEAR IN ALL PARTICULARS, MAY BECOME VERY PROMISING IF, THROUGH THIS CONFERENCE YOU START THOSE STEPS WHICH CLEARLY MUST BE TAKEN TO ASSUME COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS FURTHER GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT AND EFFECTIVENESS. I EXTEND MY SINCERE GRATITUDE TO ALL OF YOU FOR MAKING IT POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE THIS CONFERENCE, AND TO WISH YOU WELL IN YOUR DELIBERATIONS.