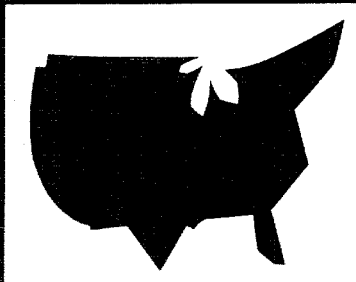




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November 28, 1967

PRESIDENT'S TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE CONGRESS
For Report on Regional Medical Programs

On Thursday, November 9, the day The Report On Regional Medical Programs To The President And The Congress was released for use by the White House Press Corps, copies of that Report and the Special Issue of our News, Information and Data publication were immediately mailed to all those currently on the mailing lists of the Division of Regional Medical Programs.

Concurrent with the White House announcement, the President forwarded The Report to the Congress with a letter of transmittal. Included in this issue is a copy of the contents of that letter.

Since the transmittal letter was also used as the statement to the White House Press Corps announcing the release of The Report (see reprint from THE WASHINGTON POST also included), the contents of the letter may also be used by our readers together with the Special Issue of News, Information and Data as background for public discussion of The Report.

Surgeon General Urges Expansion Of the Regional Medical Programs

The Regional Medical Programs begun by the United States two years ago to help fight heart disease, cancer and stroke have been so successful that the Surgeon General yesterday recommended they be expanded to cover the entire Nation.

In a special 100-page report to President Johnson and the 90th Congress, Dr. William H. Stewart urged that direct links among patient, doctor, community hospital and major medical centers be set up in the 51 regions of the land.

"Extension of the program," said Dr. Stewart, "will contribute significantly to the attack on heart disease, cancer and stroke."

Signed by President Johnson Oct. 26, 1965, the law establishing the Regional Medical Programs had a simple goal: "To speed miracles of medical research from the laboratory to the bedside."

In the report he issued yesterday, Dr. Stewart said the Government had so far given planning awards totaling \$24 million to 47 of the 51 national regions.

An additional \$7.3 million has been given five regions to begin active operation of a Regional Medical Program, Dr. Stewart said.

The results of at least three of these showed:

- In the Intermountain Region, covering Utah and parts of Colorado, Idaho, Montana,

Nevada and Wyoming, doctors in community hospitals are now linked by closed-circuit radio and television with experts at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City.

- In Wisconsin, doctors are already making special studies of uterine cancer patients, with the hope of improving and standardizing treatments.

- The Missouri region is

pioneering in services in the Smithville area, where doctors and patients now benefit from computer-assisted x-ray diagnosis that may some day be available in the entire region.

In urging operation programs like these across the entire country, Dr. Stewart estimated the annual cost of operations for each of the 51 Regional Medical Programs would be at least \$10 million.

To the Congress of the United States:

I am happy to send to you the Surgeon General's first report on Regional Medical Programs, as required by the Heart Disease, Cancer, and Stroke Amendments of 1965.

Because the law and the idea behind it are new, and the problem is so vast, the program is just emerging from the planning stage. But this report gives encouraging evidence of progress--and it promises great advances in speeding research knowledge to the patient's bedside.

In 49 regions covering 91 percent of our population, regional alliances have been formed between medical schools, hospitals, and local doctors; 24 million dollars in Federal planning money has been awarded. By early 1968, we hope to have programs underway covering 98 percent of the Nation's population.

Most important, the imagination, knowledge, and energy to operate these programs will come from the local level. More than 1600 local health leaders--physicians, officials of medical centers, hospital administrators, teachers, and other health workers--are active as members of regional advisory groups.

In five regions, cooperative medical programs are already operating with the help of 7.3 million dollars in Federal grants: the Albany region, covering northeastern New York, and portions of southern Vermont and western Massachusetts; the Intermountain region, covering Utah and parts of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Wyoming; the states of Kansas, Missouri, and Wisconsin. These areas are reporting important results already.

In the Intermountain region, for example, physicians and community hospitals are now linked by special radio and television networks with experts at the University of Utah Medical Center in Salt Lake City.

In Wisconsin, doctors are making special studies of uterine cancer patients, with the hope of improving and standardizing treatment methods.

The Missouri region is pioneering new services in the Smithville area, where doctors and patients benefit from computer-assisted X-ray diagnosis and other advanced techniques which may some day be available in the entire region.

Progress is being made and I believe these programs will help us overcome the dreaded killer diseases--heart, cancer, and stroke. And they will put us farther along the road to our goal of modern medical care for every American citizen.

Lyndon B. Johnson
The White House
November 8, 1967