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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

DATE: March 6, 1991  
FROM: Chief, HMD  
SUBJECT: History of RMPs  
TO: Director, NLM

National Institutes of Health  
National Library of Medicine  
Bethesda MD 20894

Attached is some background material concerning the history of RMPs, in connection with our conversation about a conference on the subject.

By way of summary, I should note that the RMPs were established under Public Law 89-239, signed by President Johnson on October 6, 1965. As you know, this came about as a result of the 1964 report of the Presidential Commission chaired by Dr. DeBakey.

The first grants were awarded in July, 1966. By the end of that year, 34 Regional Medical Programs had received planning grants. Thus holding the conference in 1991 would appropriately mark the 25th anniversary of the start of the program. I have asked Linda Goodwin to reserve both November 21 and 22 in the Auditorium, as we discussed.

If for some reason those dates did not work out, another possibility might be somewhere in the period January 15-17, 1992, since that would mark the 25th anniversary of the first conference on RMPs, held in Washington, D.C. on those dates in 1967.

Late in 1974, Congress passed the National Health Planning and Resources Development Act of 1975 (Public Law 93-641). This law combined into one local organization the functions formerly carried out by the RMPs and various other programs. The RMPs were phased out by June 30, 1976.

We have a significant amount of material in the collections on the RMPs, but apparently no one has written a history of the program. There are histories of at least two of the RMPs, the Wisconsin and Maryland ones (although the latter is relatively brief). You are certainly correct that the program has not yet received significant attention from an historical point of view, and a conference could help to correct that deficiency.

I will discuss the conference with Mrs. Colaianni and move ahead as you requested, beginning by contacting Dr. Rikli. I will keep you and Dr. Siegel informed of progress on the plans for the conference.

*John Parascandola*  
John Parascandola

cc: Elliot Siegel, Lois Ann Colaianni