

UPDATE



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ALLERGY AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

EMBARGOED UNTIL
11:00 a.m., EST
Monday, January 5, 1987

Patricia Randall
301/496-5717

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has awarded contracts to five medical centers to establish AIDS Treatment Evaluation Units (ATEUs). The contract proposals for these five ATEUs had been approved in June 1986, but at that time funding was available for only 14 Units.

The new Units will receive a total of \$37.3 million over the next four and one-half years to test experimental drugs in persons with Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), according to Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, director of NIAID. The patients will receive drugs that have potential for the treatment of AIDS and the various opportunistic infections and cancers that develop in AIDS patients. AIDS has been diagnosed in more than 28,000 Americans since the first case was reported in 1981.

The five new ATEUs are located at Albert Einstein Medical Center in New York, N.Y.; Duke University in Durham, N.C.; Mt. Sinai Medical Center in New York, N.Y.; Tulane University in New Orleans, La.; and the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. They expand to 19 ATEUs the network established on June 30, 1986, when \$100 million over a five-year period was awarded to 14 institutions.

(more)

Data from ATEU studies will be collected and analyzed by the AIDS Clinical Trials Coordinating Center, which will facilitate collaborative studies and speed evaluation of drugs with therapeutic potential.

Initial plans call for the ATEUs to continue studies with azidothymidine (AZT), following up on results reported in September 1986 by Burroughs Wellcome Co., the drug manufacturer. The new studies will define possible long-term toxicity, evaluate the efficacy of different dosages, and correlate the antiviral effects of the drug with clinical and immunologic responses. The Units are also conducting placebo-controlled studies to evaluate AZT in patients with AIDS-associated Kaposi's sarcoma.

In addition to studies with AZT, ATEUs will also study other therapeutic agents that show promise in the laboratory or in preliminary clinical studies. The drugs could include those with activity against the AIDS virus as well as those with potential for effectiveness against the opportunistic infections and cancers associated with AIDS.

Immunomodulators, or agents designed to enhance the immune system, may be tested alone or in combination with other drugs or therapies.

#