



HARLEY O. STAGGERS
DISTRICT 2 - MORGANTOWN

WEST VIRGINIA REGIONAL MEDICAL PROGRAM

The West Virginia Regional Medical Program is in the planning stage operating under a grant of \$208,910. The Coordinating Headquarters is at the West Virginia Medical Center in Morgantown and the Program Coordinator is Dr. C. L. Wilbar, former Secretary of Health for Pennsylvania. Dr. Clark Sleeth, Dean of the School of Medicine is chairman of the Regional Advisory Group which is broadly representative of the health interests of the State.

Effective whole-hearted cooperation is the keynote of the West Virginia Regional Medical Program with the medical practitioners, medical school staff, State Health and Comprehensive Health Planning Agencies working together in harmony for the common purpose. Typical of the spirit is the project for self-audit of treatment by the medical practitioners.

A number of planning activities are underway in the areas of coronary care, continuing education, and the formation of a health data bank, utilizing the latest computer technology.

More specific details on the West Virginia Regional Medical Program are contained in the following summary.

March 1968

West Virginia Regional Medical Program

Region State of West Virginia
Coordinating Headquarters West Virginia Medical Center
Starting Date January 1, 1967
Funding
Current Award - \$208,910
Current Request 127,632
Project Next
Year 988,910

Operational Status

Program Coordinator Dr. C. L. Wilbar, Jr.
Former Secretary of Health
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Advisory Group

1. Chairman: Dr. Clark K. Sleth
Dean, School of Medicine
2. Membership: 33 (attached)
Practicing MD's 8, Medical Center 3,
State Hospital Association 4, Voluntary
Health Agency 6, Public Agencies 4,
Allied Health 3, Public 5

Organization and Staffing

During the first year of planning, the West Virginia Regional Medical Program made significant progress in initiating its Program. Dr. Charles Wilbar was recruited as Program Coordinator on June 1, 1967, and additional staff was then hired, including an Assistant Director (Dr. Charles Holland, former Administrator of the Beckley Appalachian Regional Hospital), a Director of Public Information and a nurse. A West Virginia University Advisory Committee advises the Vice President of the Medical Center as to the role of the Medical Center in connection with the Regional Medical Programs and its Advisory Group and also assists the staff of the Regional Medical Program in program development.

Subregional Development

Subregions for the purpose of graduate education are to be established in the (1) Wheeling area; (2) Monogahela Valley area; (3) Eastern Panhandle area; (4) Parkersburg area; (5) Charlestown area; (6) Huntington area; and (7) Southern West Virginia.

Regional Advisory Group

The Regional Advisory Group has played a major role in opening channels of communication among key health institutions, encouraging cooperative arrangements and providing overall advice and guidance in developing policy. The Regional Advisory Group held four meetings during 1967, established a seven-member Executive Committee, adopted by-laws and a Constitution, helped recruit key staff and endorsed a specific proposal in the area of coronary care.

Planning Activities

Planning for the West Virginia Regional Medical Program involves an eight part program, including surveys of health related facilities and personnel, accumulation of morbidity and mortality statistics for the State and for subregional areas, and improving facilities and resources of continuing education of all health and medical personnel. Three areas are moving ahead with increasing acceleration. These are: (1) Data gathering, processing and utilization concerned with morbidity, mortality, manpower, and facilities; (2) Continuing educational activities for persons in health occupations; and (3) Beginning of specific demonstrations of improved methods for combating the toll of heart, cancer, stroke, and related diseases.

(1) Data Collection and Utilization: Plans are underway to establish a health data bank at the Computer Center of West Virginia University and should gain momentum through 1968. It is contemplated that the input, output and processing of this data will become a joint project of the Regional Medical Program and the Comprehensive Health Planning Program for West Virginia once the latter becomes funded. It is also anticipated that extensive use will be made of the research and development services of the Appalachian Center, the outreach program for the University. A start on establishing this information system has already been made through consultation services received from Operations Research Incorporated.

(2) Continuing Education: In cooperation with the Medical Center which has continuing education as a major goal, the RMP is developing continuing education programs which will create a two-way flow of information between physicians in the Medical Center and those in local hospitals. Over the past year, a good deal of the time of the staff of the Regional Medical Program and the meetings of the Advisory Committees has been committed to the subject of post-graduate physicians, nurses, dentists and hospital administrators. The Director of the RMP has established close working relationships between the Committee on Education and Hospitals of the State Medical Association and the Regional Medical Program. It is anticipated that itinerant programs will be held around the State in seven subregional areas established by the Committee on Education and Hospitals. The Center for Appalachian Studies and Development at the West Virginia University is aiding at the grassroots level of the educational program of the RMP by helping in advertising and arranging the programs throughout the State through some two hundred full-time employees of the Extension Division of this center.

(3) Feasibility Studies: Under consideration are feasibility studies in the following areas; (1) Self Audit of Treatment by Medical Practitioners; (2) Mechanical Morbidity Reporting via telephone in Mononglia County (Morgantown) and Marion County; (3) Utilization Study of Facilities in a Rural Area (Mononglia County); and (4) Coronary Care Unit Teaching Program. The latter project is concerned with training nurses. The West Virginia Regional Medical Program has worked with the State Health Department in a cooperative attempt to eventually have trained nurses for all coronary care units in West Virginia. It is hoped that in the future all sizable hospitals in the region will have competent coronary care units. Participating in the planning have been W.Va. State Medical Association, the W. Va. Heart Association, the W. VA. Nurses Association, the schools of Medicine and Nursing and the Hospital of the West Virginia University, the W. Va. Hospital Association, and the State Department of Health.

Relationship to Comprehensive Health Planning: Besides cooperation with the Comprehensive Health Planning office in connection with a health data bank, further intimate and close working relationships between the Regional Medical Program and the Comprehensive Health Planning Program has been planned and fostered. Two short combined staff meetings have taken place and the staff of the Regional Medical Program have attended and participated in two public meetings concerning Comprehensive Health Planning. Seven other public meetings are expected to occur before the end of the calendar year, again with participation by the RMP staff.

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Clarksburg, West Virginia

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Charleston, West Virginia

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