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NIH Variations on Alternative Number 5

This alternative would provide a framework for the accomplishment of the recommendations of the President's Commission concerning the establishment of a national network for dealing with heart disease, cancer and stroke in a manner which would seek to achieve the essential objectives of the Report but would also utilize the established relationships through which the Federal Government deals with the university, medical schools and research institutions on the one hand, and state and local agencies on the other. In essence, the first three recommendations of the President's Commission Report deal with (1) the concept of a national network of centers and stations, (2) the development of centers of strength in respect to research, teaching and specialized services, (3) an array of diagnostic and treatment stations engaged primarily in the provision of services but serving also an educational and informational function at the local level. The Report envisages a close working relationship between the centers and stations.

The accomplishment of these basic objectives could be brought about through the following arrangements:

1. The establishment of a national advisory group to the Public Health Service to undertake, in conjunction with the PHS and through appropriate consultation with the ^{State} ~~stated~~, the development of a framework of regions or service areas for the Nation. This framework of service areas would constitute the basic grid within which the efforts to establish centers and diagnostic and treatment stations would

take place. Some such advisory group was envisaged in the Commission's Report in its discussion of recommendations 1 and 2. The regions of service areas developed through this mechanism would be individual states, parts of states, metropolitan areas or groups of two or more states, the basic determinant of the grouping being existing teaching and research facilities, population distribution and the pattern of normal economic, social, and governmental relationships.

2. Given this national grid or framework of service areas, responsibility then could be placed upon an appropriate state governmental agency in each state to (a) carry out the necessary state, interstate, and intrastate planning to determine the location of diagnostic and treatment stations in the state; (b) identify the most suitable and appropriate relationships between these stations and regional centers of research, teaching, and specialized services; and (c) to oversee the operations of the network as it relates to the provision of health services and the conduct of extension education.

3. The conduct of this state and local planning activity would envisage the establishment of an advisory group or commission for each regional area made up of representatives of the centers of research, training and service in the state, practicing physicians, and the public at large, to assist in the determination and coordination of these activities.

4. The Federal Government would work directly with the major research teaching and centers of medical activity in the enhancement and enlargement of these centers as an overall framework of national resources in research, education, and high quality services as an end in itself. In addition a special program of grants would be available to encourage and support the activities of those centers directed toward regional relationships with the framework of diagnostic and treatment facilities in the provision of specialized professional assistance and extension education services to such stations. In providing support for the regional service and educational activities of these institutions, a criteria of award would be the extent to which such proposals conform to and implement the regional plan developed under 2 and 3 above.

Through these arrangements the Federal Government would undertake:

1. To provide for the development of an overall national plan for improving and extending the quantity and quality of services available for heart disease, cancer and stroke and the regional framework within which this would be accomplished.

2. To utilize a framework of state, interstate, and intrastate mechanisms for regional planning relating to the establishment and operation of diagnostic treatment stations and the relationship of these stations in respect to health service and educational activities to centers of research and education.

3. To provide support for the construction, equipping and operation of diagnostic and treatment stations to the extent that such proposals are compatible with the regional plan.

4. To provide funds to major research, teaching and service institutions to serve as centers in the provision of specialized services, educational functions, and to extend professional assistance and educational services to the regional framework of diagnostic and treatment stations, a criteria for such support being the extent to which the activities proposed conform with the regional plan.