

July 10

A Proposal
for a Study of the
Provision of Medical Information
in the States of
New York and New Jersey
with particular reference
to the Library of
The New York Academy of Medicine

The States of New York and New Jersey, which comprise Region II of the Regional Medical Library System of The National Library of Medicine, contain 15 medical schools and other major centers of research such as The Sloan-Kettering Institute for Cancer Research, The Roswell Park Memorial Institute, The Rockefeller University, and major pharmaceutical firms. About 15% of the scientists conducting medical research in the United States are located in Region II. The region includes a wide range of health care delivery services which cut across every problem encountered nation-wide, from the delivery of health care in remote rural areas and the delivery of health care in impoverished urban ghettos to the delivery of immensely sophisticated, complex and advanced care.

The Library of The New York Academy of Medicine serves as a principal resource for books and information in the operating network that serves the health care professionals of the States of New York and New Jersey. The components of that network are the Regional Medical Library (RML), the New York State Interlibrary Loan Network (NYSILL), the New Jersey Library Network, and the Medical Library Center of New York (MLC). A comprehensive regional plan that is constantly updated by the Advisory and Planning Committee of the Regional Medical Library gives direction to the service program and constitutes a framework for this cooperative effort. The New York Academy of Medicine operates RML and the Academy's Library provides the major backup resource collection of Region II. This document constitutes a request by The New York Academy of Medicine for funds to conduct a major study of the effectiveness of that network and to formulate recommendations for its continued improvement.

The Library of The New York Academy of Medicine contains about 450,000 books and nearly 180,000 pamphlets and receives over 4,000 serials on a regular basis. Information about the holdings of the Library is available world-wide via the printed catalogue of its collection issued in 94 folio volumes by G.K. Hall. In 1978 the Library satisfied some 75,000 requests for use of its collection, either by inter-library loans of books or periodicals, by inter-library supply of photocopies, or by providing material from its stacks to users in the library. More than 13,000 users in the library also had access to current periodicals and works of reference held on open shelves and thousands of reference questions were answered by mail, phone, or to users in the library. Less than 10% of the use of the Library is by Fellows or staff of the Academy; for example, of 25,323 items circulated or supplied by photocopy in 1978, only 2,342 went to Fellows or staff.

The direct costs of operating the library of The New York Academy of Medicine in 1978 were \$965,000; additional costs of \$310,000 were incurred for maintenance of the physical plant of the library and for administrative costs, such as those of the Business Office of the Academy. The Academy received \$116,000 from NYSILL and RML for interlibrary loan services and about \$143,000 in other fees for service. About 80% of the cost of operating the library was thus paid by the Academy from income generated from its endowment and Fellowship dues, whereas about 90% of the services of the library were provided to users other than the Fellows and staff of the Academy. Moreover, these costs take no account of the capital assets represented by the physical plant and by the collections of the library.

As far back as 1898, the New York Public Library's world famous Research Library at 42nd Street decided not to collect medical material since the Academy agreed to make its collection available to the public. The Academy therefore provides the public medical reference library for the City of New York, a support library for medicine in the New York State Library Interlibrary Loan network, a resource for the New Jersey Library network, the back-up resource for RML (Region II), a resource for scientists and physicians concerned with highly technical and advanced research in Region II, and a national resource for rare and scholarly material. The Academy seeks to continue to be the major back-up resource for the region and is anxious to continue to make the maximum contribution it can. The Academy seeks to know how best to do so in the face of steadily rising costs and increasing demands on its resources.

It is thus desirable, even urgently so, to study the past and present operations of the libraries of the region and of the network, to ensure maximum cooperation in the future and to ensure maximum efficiency in the management and use of these resources. One of the major results of the study should be to work towards persuasive guarantees of future cooperation, to identify areas where limited resources can be spent to maximum advantage, and to provide assurances to any funding agencies that tangible benefits will result from their support.

It is proposed to conduct a professional, in-depth study, taking at least one year, of all of the activities of the network and of the current and future missions and resources of each of its components. The study will examine the region with respect to networking and will examine component institutions such as RML, MLC, NYSILL and NYAM with respect to mission, management, space, staffing, acquisitions and weeding, cooperative purchasing, bibliographic control, and the forming and preservation of collections.

The goals of the study may be stated concisely as:

- I. To provide specific options for the future of the Academy Library in terms of what it should collect and to whom and in what ways it should make its collections available. Each option should be accompanied by a realistic estimate of the cost of that option and by an analysis of the physical facilities and management structure needed to carry it out.
- II. To provide, in relation to each of the options open to the Academy, an analysis of the effects of the choice of that option on the needs, programs, costs and services of The Medical Library Center, The Regional Medical Library and all users of medical library services in Region II.
- III. To provide an assessment of which options have a realistic chance of being funded, and from what sources.

Since the proposed study will be extensive and complex and since it touches on many component institutions, The New York Academy of Medicine has secured the advice of a broadly based advisory committee in planning the study. The attached appendices, which give detailed background information and detailed and specific plans for the conduct of the study, were prepared by that advisory committee in a series of meetings held in the spring of 1979. The members of that committee are:

John. A. Humphry, Chairman. Executive Director of Forest Press, publisher of the Dewey Decimal Classification. Formerly Assistant Commissioner of Education for Libraries, State of New York; formerly Chairman of the Planning and Advisory Committee, RML (Region II), and Chairman of the Governance Council, RML (Region II).

Whitfield J. Bell, Jr. Chief Executive Officer and Librarian, American Philosophical Society.

Gilbert J. Clausman, Librarian, NYU Medical Center; Immediate Past President, Medical Library Association; representing The Medical Library Center.

Doris Doran, Liaison Officer, NLM, for Region II.

Sonya W. Mirsky, Librarian, The Rockefeller University.

Ursula Poland, Librarian, Albany Medical College;
Chairman, Planning and Advisory Committee of
RML, Region II.

Joseph Post, M.D., President, The New York Academy
of Medicine.

Barbara F. Weaver and Oliver P. Gillock, New Jersey
State Library.

Proposed Budget

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| 1. Remuneration for Project Director, including benefits, at \$45,000/year,* | \$68,000 |
| 2. Comprehensive user study | 50,000 |
| 3. Study of the Academy Library, including a cost analysis of its operations | 100,000 |
| 4. Study of other resource libraries in the networks, including cost analyses | 68,000 |
| 5. Overhead costs, including secretarial assistance for the Project Director | 30,000 |
| 6. Contingencies | <u>7,000</u> |
| Total | 323,000 |

*All items are based on a period
of one year, apart from the salary
of the Project Director, who will
require 3 months to organize the
study, one year to supervise the
conduct of the study, and 3 months
to formulate and refine its
conclusions.