

## Briefing Paper

Briefing Paper  
For OSD/OSA Testimony  
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### Topic: Dr. Saenger Experiments and Informed Consent

**Synopsis:** Between February 19, 1960 and August 31, 1971, as many as 106 adult and 3 child terminal cancer patients at the University of Cincinnati teaching hospital received whole-body irradiations under the supervision of Dr. Saenger. Patients were selected by an independent group of doctors and received two days of talks about the treatment before giving consent. DoD did not fund the experiment per se; however, DoD funding was provided for a supplemental analysis to have blood-cell counts documented in hopes of developing a treatment for radiation sickness. Follow-up care for all surviving patients was completed in 1975. One patient is still alive.

### Key points to present to Congress:

- DNA did not fund the experiment.
- DNA did not in any way try to influence the experiment.
- All patients gave informed consent.
- Independent investigations by the General Accounting Office (GAO) and other organizations confirm these assertions.

### Main body of the paper:

- The primary purpose of experiment was to improve treatment and, if possible, survival of patients with advanced cancer.
- Patients gave informed consent in accordance with the directives of the Faculty Research Committee of the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Patients were briefed on two separate days in the presence of patient advocates before signing the consent forms which allowed them to participate as subjects in the experiment. The briefings addressed the experiment itself and the possible use of results to improve the treatment of injured military personnel. The project was regularly reviewed by the University Committee.
- A committee of the American College of Radiologists examined the experiment in 1971, (including informed consent issues) at the request of Senator Mike Gravel and reported on January 3, 1972, that the project was satisfactory, urging the Senator to support its continuation. The University of Cincinnati School of Medicine also investigated the experiment and released a report on February 16, 1972, indicating that the experiment was being carried out in a sound and ethical manner.

DNA contract (DASA-01-69-C-0131, DA 49-146-XZ-315, DA 49-146-XZ-029) restricted funding to supplementary analysis of blood and urine samples, according to a May 26, 1972, GAO study requested by Senator Ted Kennedy.

Candidates for experimentation had to have clinical proof of malignancy and be chosen by an independent committee of doctors. Some subjects in the study showed a slight increase in life expectancy over controls receiving standard treatments.

Dr. David Auton, RAEM, (703) 325-7744.