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FILE NO.

CMLRE-ML(T)

SUBJECT

The Experimental Use of Human Volunteers in Toxicology Division

TO Ch, Toxicology Division
CmLC Medical LabsFROM Toxicology Division
CmLC Medical Labs

DATE 9 Mar 53

Dr Barry/sw/6134

COMMENT NO. 1

1. GASSING BRANCH. In the past this Branch has had to draw heavily upon its own staff to provide the necessary volunteers for experimental work. For example, during 1952 twenty-three men volunteered an average of eight times each for various experiments.

2. At the present time work on two programs has been interrupted due to lack of experimental subjects. These are: (1) tests of the protective value of cold-wet clothing using simulants of toxic agents; and (2) the influence of exercise on the toxicity of inhaled GB.

3. AEROSOL BRANCH. A survey of the extent of past use of Aerosol staff members as experimental subjects reveals an incidence per individual which is approximately proportional to the length of time each person has been associated with Medical Laboratories. Thus, one person served 14 times as a volunteer subject; four, 5 or 6 times; and five, 1 or 2 times.

4. In addition work on two programs cannot be begun until a suitable number of volunteers is obtained. These are: (1) the comparative vesicant action of H, Q, and T, requiring approximately 20 subjects; and (2) tests of the protective value of cold-dry clothing using simulants of toxic agents; about 25 subjects are needed for this study.

5. FIELD TOXICOLOGY BRANCH. The history of the use of Field Toxicology staff members as experimental subjects is similar to that of Aerosol Branch. Thus, two persons served 11 to 13 times as subjects; one 4 times; and seven 1 or 2 times.

6. Currently, planning of experiments to study the cutaneous toxicity of phosgene oxime is delayed due to uncertainty of the supply of subjects.

7. In summary it is clear that in the past considerable use has been made of the staff members of Toxicology Division as experimental subjects. It is undesirable that this situation should continue for several reasons. First, the problem of health hazards must be considered. By the circumstances of their work some staff members may have been exposed to small chronic concentrations of CW agents for some time. To expose those same individuals to higher concentrations of the same agents in acute experiments is to compound the possibilities of toxic effects in these subjects.

8. Second, staff members may make the poorest subjects from the experimenter's point of view. They are familiar with the action of the agents under study and in experiments in which subjective reactions are concerned may be less objective than

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desirable in reporting results to the experimenter. Moreover, the use of the same subjects repeatedly does not provide the experimenter with results that are truly representative of the population as a whole and may lead to a constant bias in the results, particularly when the possibility of the development of hypersensitivity phenomena is considered.

9. Third, the problem of morale among staff members must be considered. Some individuals may volunteer due to the persuasion of their associates who might not otherwise freely do so. The indefinite continuation of this policy with no relief in sight could be an important influence in determining future morale of staff members.

10. Finally, it is clear that an individual may not be available to perform his regular duties in the Division during the time in which he is serving as an experimental subject. This may lead in some cases to undesirable delay in the completion of important projects.

Michael C. Barry
MICHAEL C. BARRY, M.D.
Toxicology Division

CMLRE-ML(T) (9 Mar 53) *MS*
TO: Scientific Director, CmlC Medical Labs FROM: Ch, Toxicology Division, CmlC Medical Labs Date: 10 Mar 53 COMMENT #2 Dr Silver/sw/6134

This is the current situation with tests requiring human volunteers.

S. D. Silver
S. D. SILVER
Chief, Toxicology Division

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