

J. C. Franklin, Manager

November 7, 1947

Albert H. Holland, Jr., M.D., Acting Medical Advisor

MEDICAL AND OPERATIONAL POLICY DECISIONS

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SYMBOL: AECT

Submitted herewith is a brief survey of the problems of both medical and operational policy which are presented for your consideration by this office.

1. The acquisition of acceptable personnel is extremely difficult. Existing Civil Service criteria do not adequately provide for some of the highly specialized technical fields which are peculiar to the Atomic Energy Commission. Further, the Civil Service pay scale cannot compete with industrial pay scales. Therefore, in any one instance an individual with a given amount of experience is usually entitled to less financial remuneration if he accepts federal employment. This is an unfortunate situation since the Atomic Energy Commission exercises advisory and supervisory services to its contractors, and therefore should be equipped with the best available personnel rather than the reverse.

2. For some time there has been a feeling among the health-physic groups on the Project that they should not be within the scope of the general medical and biological program. To date there has been no clear-cut delineation of this problem. GH Instruction 18 (Inclosure 1) is subject to considerable interpretations and provides opportunity for much reduplication of effort.

3. It is highly desirable to establish and maintain (see Inclosure 2) a uniform system of medical, biological and health-physic reports and distribution thereof. Essentially, this is a matter of national policy within the Atomic Energy Commission. The importance of such a system cannot be overemphasized particularly with respect to evaluation of illnesses alleged to be a result of occupation with the Atomic Energy Commission or its contractors. We have both a legal and moral responsibility which requires that we undertake adequate statistical surveys and interpret them in the light of our medical and biological research information. Such studies are mandatory if we expect to maintain the efficiency and success of our personnel protection program.

4. Many cases of illnesses arise which are alleged to be due to employment in the atomic industry, but require further medical study before a diagnosis of occupational disease can be established. It is highly desirable to have a central fund under the Director of the Division of Biology and Medicine from which all regional Medical Advisors could obtain the money necessary to conduct medical and research studies for cases which, in their opinions, require further study.

REPOSITORY *Lake Ridge, Tenn.*
COLLECTION *Records of Holding Area*
Doc. 1944-1947
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5. The Atomic Energy Commission holds many sub-contracts administratively within the OEDO but geographically lying outside the Oak Ridge area. The regional Medical Office is frequently called upon to visit such sub-contractors and review their medical and health programs particularly with respect to hazardous materials peculiar to the Commission's activities. Occasions arise when in the interest of safe operations and personnel protection expenditures of money must be contemplated in order to improve safe practices. It has never been clearly defined whether or not, for example, a company machining beryllium for AEC use can be requested or even directed to install more adequate ventilation. Management of course in most instances is perfectly willing to cooperate if we provide the funds. A definite policy is urgently needed so that we may determine where our responsibility for health and safety ceases. It should be borne in mind that a sub-contractor's employee can provide us with as much adverse publicity as an AEC employee.

6. The isotope distribution program is of primary importance to the Commission from a public relations viewpoint, but in a larger sense to the nation as well. The continuation of an active, far-reaching progressive isotope program cannot be overemphasized. However, there are many policy problems which arise from this activity. Questions such as the following still remain unanswered:

- a. Does the Atomic Energy Commission's legal responsibility cease when an isotope has been delivered to the purchaser?
- b. How far can moral responsibility be presumed to extend in this program?
- c. Should the AEC undertake a large program and provide facilities for radioactive waste disposal for isotope recipients?
- d. What part, if any, should the AEC assume with respect to cyclotron produced isotopes at the various universities throughout the country?

It may be desirable to have comparable safety codes and personnel protection measures adopted at the various universities and research institutions throughout the United States. The matter of effecting this is of some concern since if cyclotron produced isotopes can be purchased, distributed and handled at will throughout the United States, the efforts of the

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Commission to maintain safe practices may be seriously handicapped. Obviously, this is a very delicate question for we do not wish in any way to encroach upon the scientific liberty of free institutions.

7. The establishment of an AEC sponsored training school in health-physics is urgently required. There are not sufficient men with adequate training to fill all of the needs of the Commission, its contractors, and outside agencies desiring to establish isotope research programs. It is strongly urged that one or two individuals be allowed to devote full time to training programs in health-physics and related subjects which purportedly would last approximately six to eight weeks. Most all of this instruction could take place outside of a restricted area and therefore representatives of industry, hospitals and research laboratories could be permitted to attend these training courses without divulgence of security to a large number of individuals and without necessitating lengthy clearances prior to instruction. The best assurance we have that our national isotope program will be conducted safely and wisely is to train personnel to recognize the radiation hazards presented by isotopic research.

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2 Attachments:

1. GH Instruction 18
2. Cy memo to Legal Advisor
in Acting Medical Advisor,
dat 11/7/47.