34 NHLI Grants Given To Universities, Hospitals For Research Centers

The National Heart and Lung Institute has awarded 34 grants totalling $16.4 million to establish Specialized Centers of Research (SCORS) at 29 universities and hospitals throughout the country.

Each SCOR will focus its resources, facilities, and manpower on specific problems in one of the following disease areas: arteriosclerosis, pulmonary disease, thrombosis, or hypertension.

Goal Explained

The goal of the SCOR program is to develop new knowledge relevant to the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of these diseases and to hasten the clinical application of this knowledge.

Thirteen SCORS will deal with arteriosclerosis, 11 with pulmonary disease, five with thrombosis, and five with hypertension. The number of research tasks to be undertaken will vary from one SCOR to the next.

No individual center will attempt

(See CENTERS, Page 7)

Register, Donate Blood, You May Win a Color TV

If you are a blood donor, as well as an NIH employee, you may win a color television set.

Dr. Thomas C. Chalmers, Clinical Center Director, said the contest marks the beginning of a 6-month stepped-up drive to recruit new blood donors.

The television set, donated by the NIH R&W Association, will be given to the employee whose name is drawn from a lottery of donors.

The drawing will take place in January; that month has been designated by Congress as National Blood Donor Month.

During the 6-month period, members of the Blood Bank hope to collect 3,600 units of blood and add many new names to their list of eligible NIH donors.

Each employee who registers as a blood donor, and each time he donates a unit of blood, will have his name put in the lottery.

Donors already registered and those who register early August may be eligible to donate three units of blood before the January drawings. Donors may give up to five times a year.

Members of the immediate Offices of NIH Director and the CC Director and Blood Bank employees, are not eligible for the drawing.

For further information call Rodney Douglass, Ext. 64506.

Carol Williams, a summer aid, admires the poster announcing the drawing, and dreams of winning the color TV.

NINDS Releases Booklet On Huntington's Disease; Genetic Nerve Disorder

In hereditary disorders for which no cure is known, early recognition, followed by accurate genetic counseling, may be the only means of control.

This is stressed in a new publication on Huntington's disease (HD) recently issued by the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke.

HD is a grave genetic disorder marked by a gradual destruction of nerve cells in the brain.

One important phase of HD research described in the illustrated pamphlet Huntington's Disease (Huntington's Chorea), Hope through Research, aims at developing an accurate diagnostic test.

According to the booklet, research to find a reliable test for HD is particularly valuable because persons with a defective gene usually do not show typical symptoms—flinging arms and legs and mental deterioration—until they have reached middle age.

By this time, the defect has already been passed on to one or (See NERVE DISORDERS, Page 7)

Neanderthal Man Aids Speech Research: Child's Pharynx Growth Repeats Evolution

The similarity of the newborn and Neanderthal skulls and pharynxes differ greatly from that of the modern adult man. The undeveloped shallow pharyngeal tubes are not as efficient as the deeper, more flexible adult man's for forming speech.

The reconstructed vocal apparatus of Neanderthal man, who lived some 40 to 70 thousand years ago, shows that regardless of his intelligence he could not have spoken a modern language any more than an ape or today's normal infant.

If speech were primarily a function of intelligence, apes, who can make simple sentences in sign language, should be able to learn to speak.

Studies supported by the National Institute of Dental Research show that the vocal tract of Neanderthal man as well as of today's infants is more like those in monkeys and apes than modern adults.

Dr. Philip Lieberman and other investigators from the University of Connecticut and the Haskins Laboratories in New Haven reported their findings in Linguistic Inquiries.

They found that apes and monkeys cannot speak because the shape of their throats approximates a slightly flared straight tube which is incapable of producing the varied sounds of speech.

The voice box is so high in the throat that most of the pharynx is missing. It is the flexible chamber of the pharynx that forms some consonants and vowels.

Dr. Lieberman began studying Neanderthal man after he noticed certain Mongoloid children who do not talk have heads with an infantile shape. He found that, internally, Neanderthal skulls are similarly shaped.

Computer analysis of the cries of infants, and of mature apes and monkeys, with direct measurements of vocal tracts, allowed the development of models which show the sounds can be produced by a slightly flared tube.

A reconstruction of the vocal tract of Neanderthal man, following methods of comparative anatomy, produced similar limited sounds with fewer vowels and consonants than today's human speech. Apparently, Neanderthal speech was inefficient and monkey-like.

Having a voice box high in the throat makes it possible for apes, monkeys, and infants to breathe and swallow simultaneously without choking.

Modern Man Lost Skill

Neanderthal man also had this skill, but the modern adult human lost it when his vocal tract became a bent, three-chambered structure (larynx, pharynx and mouth) with complicated neurological controls to match.

The position of the human voice box actually hampers the efficiency of adult eating and breathing.

The investigators suggest that the lowered position of the larynx evolved because natural selection favored individuals with more sophisticated calls.

The scientists propose that the shape of the adult skull reflects the evolution of the pharynx, and that childhood development of the vocal tract repeats primate evolution.

Studies of infant anatomy are

(See NEANDERTHAL, Page 4)
The potential for training allied health workers in colleges and universities founded for blacks will be determined by the National Urban League. This study will be conducted under a contract awarded by the Bureau of Health Manpower Education.

In announcing the award, Dr. Kenneth M. Endicott, BHME Director, said "... the Urban League will examine the current status of allied health training in educational institutions founded for blacks, and begin to design a plan to increase the number and quality of allied health training programs in these institutions."

Indications show that the need for allied health workers in 1980 will be nearly two times greater than the present supply.

Selected for Research

According to Dr. Endicott, the National Urban League was selected to undertake the research because of its close contact with colleges and universities founded for blacks and its orientation to problems of social concern.

Thomas D. Hatch, DAHM acting director, explained that "... possible consortium arrangements to link educational and training resources of these colleges and universities with other institutions and medical facilities in the same geographical area will be explored."

Catalog Lists Courses Offered During 1971-72 By Graduate Program

New courses offered this fall by the Graduate Program at NIH include Psychodynamics, Physiology for Non-Biologists, Intercellular Communication in the Nervous System, and an Introduction to Statistical Genetics.

Other courses include languages and general studies, mathematics, microbiology and immunology, and statistics.

Catalogues listing the schedule of all the courses plus a mail registration form, are available from the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences, Bldg. 10, Room BI-L-101. For further information call Ext. 60571.
Joseph J. Cooney Dies; Served for 40 Years In Federal Government

Joseph J. Cooney, former chief of the Contracts Staff, Office of Administrative Management, Bureau of Health Manpower Education, died Tuesday, July 13, at Northern Virginia Hospital.

He had retired from the Bureau last May after 40 years of service with various Government agencies.

Mr. Cooney began his Federal career in Cleveland in 1928, with the Veterans Administration.

He came to Washington in 1933 for that agency, attended evening classes at Columbus University where he received his LLB degree, and was admitted to the D.C. Bar.

Mr. Cooney served tours of duty in Manila and in Puerto Rico as an examiner, adjudicator, and claims board member for the VA. During World War II, he served in the Army Air Corps in Italy.

In 1950 Mr. Cooney began work in contracts and procurement for the Department of the Army at Fort Belvoir.

Named Branch Chief

In 1956 he transferred to the Department of the Navy as a contract specialist. He remained there until joining the Public Health Service in 1963, as chief of the Contract Branch of the Bureau of State Services (Community Health).

On several occasions Mr. Cooney was cited for his work at the Department of the Navy for the quality of his work. He also received several letters of commendation for his work in the PHS.

At the recent Third Annual NIH

Katherine Ryan's Work Appraisal Given At Retirement Party, Adds Up to A-Plus

"Leaps tall buildings with a single bound; is faster than a speeding bullet; is stronger than a locomotive." This was the beginning of Katherine Ryan's "performance appraisal," and it was all said in jest at her recent retirement party.

She was honored, after 25 years of Government service, by friends and colleagues of the Office of Personnel Management who presented her with a parting gift and best wishes.

Miss Ryan remarked later that "the party ... was certainly the highlight of my Federal career."

Come Here in 1963

Miss Ryan, a personnel management specialist, Systems and Actions Branch, came to NIH in 1963 as appointment supervisor in the Program Services Section.

One of her important assignments here was setting up personnel operations for the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in N.C.

Her last assignment before retirement, was taking part in a review of personnel records and files operations in the Office of the Secretary, HEW.

Miss Ryan began her Federal career in 1941 at Tilton General Hospital, Fort Dix. At that post she later became civilian personnel officer.

Other personnel positions followed with the U.S. Treasury Department in N.Y. and at McGuire Air Force Base in N.J.

On that last assignment she traveled.

Nursing Division Issues School Planning Booklet

A brochure, describing how a nursing school pooled resources with other professional schools in a university, is now available from the Division of Nursing, Bureau of Health Manpower Education.

Cooperative Planning for a School of Nursing Within a Health Science Complex discusses in detail the complicated planning and coordination required for remodeling and building an addition to the Health Science Building at the University of Washington.

The Health Science Complex will permit enrollment in medical, pharmaceutical, dental, and nursing fields to grow from 4,000 to 6,000.


A single free copy may be obtained from the Division of Nursing, NIH, Bethesda, Md. 20014.

At her retirement party, Kate Ryan displays a broaclet charm given by co-workers. Helene Devay, Systems and Actions Branch chief, presented the gift.

Registration for Federal Education Program Will Start Week of Sept. 13

The Federal After-Hours Education Program will offer more than 150 college-level courses this fall to Federal employees, military personnel and the general public.

The courses will be given after working hours, in Federal buildings located in downtown Washington, D.C.

This program, coordinated by the CSC's Bureau of Training and the College of General Studies, George Washington University, offers courses leading to B.S. and M.S. degrees. Participants may also enroll as non-degree students.

Registration will be held on Sept. 7 and 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., in conference rooms A, B, and D, Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Ave., N.W.

Classes begin the week of Sept. 13.

AFNA Program Opens Medical, Health Fields To Minority Students

A special program to increase significantly the number of minority students qualified to enter medical and health sciences schools will be developed under a Division of Physician and Health Sciences Education contract awarded to the American Foundation for Negro Affairs (AFNA) of Philadelphia.

AFNA is a nonprofit organization set up to increase the number of blacks in the major areas of American life.

AFNA will formulate a 4-year premedical curriculum to take into account the varying backgrounds, abilities and goals of disadvantaged students. It will specify the major science, liberal arts, and remedial subjects required as "core" studies.

The program will be devised so that if a student does not complete courses required for admission to medical school, he can enter other health professions.

Deans Included

Studies will be formulated under the supervision of AFNA's Steering Committee which includes the deans from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, and Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital.

Also, Temple University School of Medicine; Medical College of Pennsylvania; Thomas Jefferson University, and Philadelphia College of Osteopathy.

The contract covers the second phase of a long-term project under way at AFNA. The first phase is concerned with orienting minority group students in high school toward medical careers.

The first group of 60 high school students will begin the orientation studies this month.
Latest Participants in NIH Visiting Scientists Program Listed Here

7/8—Dr. Akira Tanaka, Japan, Laboratory of Experimental Neurology. Sponsor: Dr. William F. Caviness, NINDS, Bldg. 36, RM. 4A27.

7/8—Dr. Erik Westergaard, Denmark, Laboratory of Neuropathology and Neuroanatomical Sciences. Sponsor: Dr. Milton W. Brightman, NINDS, Bldg. 36, Rm. 3328.

7/16—Dr. Akira Hasegawa, Japan, Laboratory of Chemistry. Sponsor: Dr. Hewitt G. Fletcher, NIAMD, Bldg. 4, Rm. 205.

7/18—Dr. Friedhelm Lamprecht, Germany, Laboratory of Clinical Science. Sponsor: Dr. Irwin J. Kopin, NIMH, Bldg. 10, Rm. 2D46.

Area Stables Offering Discounts To R&W Riding Club Members

Trail rides are now being formed by the R&W Riding Club which meets 4 times a week; Wednesday and Friday evenings, and Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Discounts are offered to members of the club by area stables—1½ hours will cost $4. Annual membership fee is $8.

For further information contact Sandy Epperson, Ext. 65064.

R&W Riding Club members are up in the saddle in preparation for a trail ride.

Hazel Rea Appointed to FEGLI Advisory Committee by CSC

Hazel W. Rea, administrative officer for the Mental Health Intramural Research Program, has been appointed to serve on the five-member Employee Advisory Committee on Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI).

She was named to the post by the Civil Service Commission Chairman Robert Hampton.

Mrs. Rea is especially interested in suggestions and recommendations from all HEW staff members. Suggestions may be directed to Mrs. Rea, Bldg. 36, Room 1A-07, NIH, Bethesda, Md. 20014.

Personnel Offices will answer questions about the program.

Lipid Metabolism Branch To Establish 6 Clinics, Central Patient Registry

The Lipid Metabolism Branch of the National Heart and Lung Institute has awarded seven contracts totaling $2.6 million for the establishment and support of six Lipid Research Clinics, and a Central Patient Registry and Coordinating Center, at medical institutions across the Nation.

Clinics Carry Out Research

The Clinics will carry out research directed toward the prevention of premature atherosclerosis through the identification and treatment of blood- lipid abnormalities.

Elevated levels of cholesterol and other fatty substances, collectively called lipids, are strongly associated with increased risk of atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and delayed consequences of the disease such as heart attacks and strokes.

During the past 6 years, research studies involving more than 2,500 patients by scientists and clinicians of the NHL's Molecular Diseases Branch and elsewhere have established that elevated blood lipids may be indicative of at least five different disorders.

Type Difers

Designated as hyperlipoproteinemias Types I through V, each type differs from the others in clinical manifestations, risk for the patient, and responsiveness to therapy.

Research has also resulted in 1) effective means for differentiating among lipid-transport disorders by lipoprotein analysis or other techniques and 2) development of therapeutic diets, supplemented as necessary with specific lipid-lowering agents that can correct or substantially improve the lipid-transport abnormality in nearly all instances.

The studies carried out by the new clinics will be an extension of previous research. Their aim will be to improve the detection and clinical management of hyperlipoproteinemias in the U.S. population.

Center Monitors Projects

One contract was awarded to the University of North Carolina for a Central Patient Registry and Coordinating Center. This center will plan and monitor collaboraive projects of the clinics and collect, process, and store data.

The educational institutions receiving contracts are Stanford University, University of California, University of Washington, Johns Hopkins University, University of Alabama, and Baylor University College of Medicine.
in the Glassblowing Unit will soon reach retirement age, DRS has established a position for a glassblower who will be trained "from scratch."

It is a 5-year program, and, Mr. Fagan said, the "opportunity is there."

**CONFERENCES**

(Continued from Page 4)

in the program.

DRS employees are about as diversified a group as can be found on the campus. Veterinarians, chemists, and biomedical engineers are part of the staff.

And to meet staff needs employees may enroll in courses ranging from simple arithmetic to scientific, technical, and administrative courses.

Recently, a combined course for junior and senior animal technicians was given. Just half of the class members were from DRS, the others came from different institutes.

Because a number of employees

**Froehlich, Kulwich Named Assistants in NIAID's Extramural Programs**

Dr. Luz A. Froehlich and Romano Kulwich have been named assistants to the associate director for Extramural Programs of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

Dr. Froehlich will be assistant for clinical programs, while Dr. Kulwich will serve as assistant for program review and evaluation. Both will work with Dr. William I. Gay.

Dr. Froehlich received her M.D. degree from the University of the Philippines in Manila in 1953.

Later, she became a diplomate of the American Board of Pathology and was certified in 1961.

Dr. Froehlich was senior cancer research fellow at Roswell Park Memorial Institute, Buffalo, from 1960 until 1962 when she joined the Buffalo Children's Hospital, finally serving as acting head of the Department of Pathology.

Since 1963 she has been a pathologist for the Perinatal Research Branch, National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke.

Dr. Kulwich received his B.S. degree in Agriculture in 1940 and his Ph.D. degree in Animal Nutrition in 1951, both from the University of Florida.

Before coming to NIH as a grants associate in 1962, Dr. Kulwich worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 11 years.

He has since served on the staff of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and was director of the Endocrinology Program for the National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases.

In 1969 he went to the National Center for Health Services Research and Development. His most recent position there was Director, Office of Review and Advisory Services.

Robert Grubbs, Sr., observes John Green deftly assemble a membrane filter unit for sterilizing tissue culture media. Mr. Green is taking basic adult education classes. In his first year he set a "personal goal"—reading one book a week. He exceeded his quo by reading 53. Lab personnel in photos are from the Media and Glassware Section, LAB.

**Moratorium Committee Sponsors Rock Concert Tomorrow (Wed.)**

The NIH-NMH Vietnam Moratorium Committee is sponsoring its second annual rock concert tomorrow (Wednesday, Aug. 4), from 12 Noon to 1 p.m., on the lawn behind Stone House (Bldg. 16).

Ricky Lyon's rock combo will play. Employees, including summer training aides, are invited to the concert.

**Publication Summarizes New Research Findings in Neurologic Disorders**

Latest research findings on the major neurological and sensory disorders are summarized in a new publication, NINDS Research Profiles, 1970, published by the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke.

One of the most exciting developments in the last year, following about 12 years of research effort, was approval of the drug L-dopa for general prescription use. Success with this drug in treating patients with Parkinson's disease has opened many new areas of study.

The pamphlet also reports continued success in learning about a group of lipid-storage diseases—the sphingolipidoses—which cause grave neurological disorders in the newborn and young children.

A missing enzyme has now been identified in six of these disorders, including Tay-Sachs disease.

The new publication also reports advances in epilepsy, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, stroke, head injury, speech and hearing, and spinal cord injury.

A free copy is available from the NINDS Information Office, NIH, Bldg. 36, Rm. 4D-04, Bethesda, Md. 20014.

**Dr. Boomer Given PHS Medal For Services as EEO Official**

Dr. Donald S. Boomer received the PHS Commissioned Corps Commendation Medal on Thursday, July 29. He is a research psychologist, Division of Clinical and Behavioral Research, National Institute of Mental Health.

The award, presented by NIMH Director Dr. Bertram S. Brown, was given to Dr. Boomer for his outstanding leadership, service, and achievement while serving as the Deputy EEO Officer for the NIMH Intramural Research Program, 1968-1970.

Dr. Boomer's friends, fellow workers, and those who share a special interest in the EEO Program attended the award ceremony.
Tufts to Evaluate Test For Early Cancer Signs In Gastrointestinal Tract

A project to evaluate an early detection test for cancer of the colon (large intestine) and rectum will be initiated by the Tufts University School of Medicine.

The university was awarded a National Cancer Institute contract for the study. Dr. Nathaniel I. Berlin, scientific director for General Laboratories and Clinics, will direct the project.

Dr. Robert Schwartz, with Drs. James Patterson, Larry Nathan- son, and other co-workers at Tufts, will examine the specificity of a test developed earlier by Dr. Phil Gold of McGill University.

Dr. Gold and his colleagues have been engaged in experiments indicating that all human cancers of the colon and rectum contain an identical tumor-specific antigen—a protein which elicits a distinctive immune response—thus distinguishing tissue of colon-rectal tumors from other types of tissue, whether normal or cancerous.

The Canadian scientists developed a radioimmunoassay test to measure the antigen, called carcino-embryonic antigen (CEA), in blood samples, and found consistently elevated levels of CEA in specimens from patients with cancers of the large intestine and rectum.

Observes Test Response

Other investigators have been unable to confirm the specificity of this test. But they have observed a test response indicating the presence of CEA in the blood of patients with other common diseases including inflammation of the pancreas, cirrhosis of the liver, chronic kidney failure and cancers of the lung, pancreas, and breast.

The first phase of the project will determine if this test is indeed specific for cancers of the large intestine and rectum and other areas of the gastrointestinal tract, or if it also indicates other diseases in those areas and in other organs.

The study participants, from Tufts and the New England Medical Center Hospitals, will include about 100 apparently normal individuals and 1500 to 2000 patients with various diseases. Development of a new and more rapid test for CEA will also be attempted.

The second phase will be started if Dr. Gold's test proves specific for gastrointestinal cancers. It will determine the usefulness of the CEA assay for early detection of cancers of the colon and rectum.

Data collected from patients in the first phase will form the basis for this part of the study. These patients will be monitored to determine how closely the levels of CEA in their blood relate to the development and extent of intestinal and rectal cancers.

First Class in Computer Training Program Holds Graduation Tomorrow

The first class from the Computer Operator's Training Program will graduate tomorrow (Wednesday, Aug. 4). Dr. Robert Q. Mastro, NIH Director, and James Robinson, HEW Steering Committee on Upward Mobility Programs, will speak at the graduation ceremony.

The program, under the aegis of the Computer Center Branch, Division of Computer Research and Technology, started a year ago, and fosters the objectives of the Merit Promotion and EEO Plans.

Offers Opportunity

It gives NIH employees in Grades 3 to 5, with little chance to advance in their current jobs, an opportunity of studying computer operations through the DCRT program.

Because there is a need for well-trained computer operators throughout Federal agencies, the Computer Center Branch designed a new curriculum which combined on-the-job training with classroom lectures.

More than 100 applicants applied for the ten training positions that were advertised. Trainees, who came from many NIH Institutes and Divisions, were selected on the basis of their records and personal interviews. Among the occupations represented were guards, clerks, laboratory workers and animal caretakers.

The trainees worked with experienced NIH computer operators in the Computer Center. As the students gained knowledge they took on more responsibility, until they were ready to assume the full work load.

The successful candidates are now being interviewed for computer jobs throughout the Government.
Viruses Fatal to Sheep May Cause Cancerous Transformation of Cells

Two viruses, known to cause fatal "slow virus diseases" in sheep, have now been shown to cause cancerous transformation of cells.

These findings have important implications for theories on the viral cause of cancer and the development of slow virus infections.

**Research Published**

The malignant potential of the two viruses—visna and progressive pneumonia (PPV)—was reported by Drs. Kenneth Takemoto and Lawrence Stone, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, in the June issue of the *Journal of Virology*.

The investigators began their search for a connection between the two viruses and cancer after they discovered that the viruses contained an enzyme which has been found in many tumor-causing viruses.

The transforming capacity of visna and PPV, they theorize, is associated with the presence of the enzyme known as RNA-dependent DNA polymerase.

**Cells Become Altered**

The viral polymerase is presumed responsible for synthesis of this DNA copy.

Investigators report that mouse cells infected with either visna or PPV became altered in their form and structure. Within two cell culture passages, the virus-infected material consisted entirely of transformed cells.

Although infectious virus could not be detected at that time, both visna and PPV were recovered from all cell lines when they were cultivated with normal sheep testis cells.

This indicates that virus genetic material was associated with transformed cells.

**Mice Inoculated**

When the investigators inoculated mice with visna and PPV transformed cells, small fibrosarcoma tumors appeared 2 months later in newborns at the site of inoculation and after only one month in x-irradiated young adult animals.

Newly-weaned animals inoculated with the transformed cells had developed tumors after one month.

The researchers' findings also shed light on the possible mechanism of certain slow virus infections.

They suggest that infection of animal hosts by visna and PPV may result in "integration" of a DNA copy of part of the viral genetic material into the host cell's genetic material and subsequent virus reproduction occurs by way of the DNA template.

**Dr. Bucher Named Dean Of New Med. School**

Dr. Robert M. Bucher, deputy director, Bureau of Health Manpower Education, has accepted the post of dean of the Medical School at the University of South Alabama—a new school which plans to have its first students in 1973.

In recent years, Department efforts were increasingly aimed at problems faced by career health care professionals—primarily physician manpower—and in improving arrangements for health care delivery.

The report also stresses the need for concerted action to strengthen the medical schools to assure their continued growth and development.

**NERVE DISORDERS**

At a ceremony in New Delhi, V. V. Giri, President of India, presents the first Amrut Mody Award for Medicine to Dr. Ranjit Roy Chaudhury, for his studies on reproductive endocrinology.

This research, funded by NICHD, is considered the most outstanding done in that country in the past 7 years. Dr. Chaudhury, professor and head, Department of Pharmacology, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh, is the first child born at Geneva. The award is named for Dr. Mody, one of India's most prestigious scientists. —Capital News Photos.
Viral Hepatitis Research May Help Define Role Of Antigen in Disease

The Clinical Center and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases are conducting a joint study on liver disease among hospital personnel. The disease is viral hepatitis.

This research is under the direction of CC Director Dr. Thomas C. Chalmers. The study will help determine whether employees exposed frequently to patients and blood products more often have Australia (Au) or hepatitis-associated antigen or antibody in their bloodstream than other employees.

Members of the NIH community are asked to participate in the survey. Approximately 2,000 employees will be needed.

Each year, in the U.S., an estimated 30,000 patients develop hepatitis from transfusions of infected blood donated by apparently healthy people.

In an attempt to prevent such infection, blood banks refuse to take blood from people with a medical history of hepatitis. However, investigators believe some people may unknowingly have subclinical cases of the disease, or they may be carrying the hepatitis-causing organism in their blood.

Recently, a virus-like particle—the Au antigen—has been suspected of playing a role in the hepatitis (serum or type B) that is primarily spread by blood products. Investigators anticipate the antigen may be used routinely in the future to screen blood donors.

They estimate that as many as 7,500 overt cases of hepatitis and 750 deaths a year could be prevented if such a method were available to detect subclinical hepatitis or carriers of the disease among donors.

Investigators suspect that serum hepatitis may also be spread by close person-to-person contact.

Employees suspected of being at "high risk" of having the antigen are those who work with the blood of patients or animals that have the antigen.

These include operating room nurses, chronic hemodialysis unit nurses and technicians, ward nurses and physicians having direct contact with patients, dentists and dental technicians, and handlers of chimpanzees.

Rates of antigen-positive tests among those groups will be compared with rates among "low risk" employees, including office workers, who have no contact with patients, blood, or other material from patients or animals.

**Blood Samples Needed**

Surveys in this country have revealed that one to five apparently healthy individuals per thousand have the antigen.

In order to have an accurate survey, a cross section of employees is being asked to donate a blood sample.

Participants will be asked to fill out a questionnaire for possible previous hepatitis exposure. In accordance with NIH procedures, each person will receive $2 per sample.

Employees with abnormal test results as well as some with normal results will undergo a follow-up blood sample for verification.

Information concerning abnormal laboratory results will be given only to the employee and/or his personal physician. The Employee Health Service will consult with any employees who are found to have the antigen, or abnormal liver function tests.

At present, there is no evidence that chronic carriers of the antigen can infect others by any way other than donation of blood.

**PHS Sponsors Defense Course**

A 5-day course in public health, medical, chemical, and biological defense will be given by the Division of Emergency Health Services, PHS.

For further information call Dr. W. F. Abercrombie, (301) 443-2010.

---

**Data Shows New Trend In Birth Control Choice**

Results of a survey on methods used to prevent conception, were recently reported by National Institute of Child Health and Human Development contractors.

The methods included surgical sterilization. Data was furnished by white married persons living in a suburban area near San Francisco, in an economic and educational level that is slightly above the national average.

Sterilizing operations were divided into two categories—remedial and contraceptive. Remedial operations were intended to correct a pathological disorder; contraceptive operations were intended to prevent further pregnancies.

Among couples with the wife's age ranging from 20-54 years, 23 percent had had contraceptive operations. Over two-thirds of the operations were vasectomies performed on the husband.

The number of children the wife had borne, the couple's religion, and their education, influenced the prevalence of sterilizing operations.

The percentage of couples with contraceptive operations increased with the number of children they had.

Hence, voluntarily sterile couples have had, on the average, a slightly larger number of children than others, but rarely more than four.

Remedial operations, usually hysterectomies, were reported by 12 percent of the wives. Of these women, one-fourth were also counted among those with contraceptive operations.

After allowing for this overlap, the prevalence of surgical sterilization in this population is 81 percent.

Six years ago, a National Fertility Survey, supported by NICHD, had shown that both vasectomies and tubal ligations were prevalent in the West than in other parts of the country. Vasectomies are as much as 3 to 5 times as common in the West as in the rest of the nation.

This recent research is part of a Contraceptive Drug Study undertaken by the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Care Program.