

May 21, 1974

W. McFate Smith, M.D.  
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Federal Office Bldg.  
50 Fulton Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mac:

I dropped by the Intervention meeting as an observer, as did Henry Taylor. It sounded the same as the last two years with chit-chat on theories and bickering about semantics. The absence of your leadership was clearly felt, but the discussion was reasonably fruitful in the end. I suppose a certain amount of this is part of feeling the way to the arm-chair formulation of a new program -- "Maintenance".

But I would like to encourage that we return soon to science. You have available several sets of early data from intervention -- both real and pretest. I would hope this might be collected systematically, as we've tried to do here, and given a hard look at.

It is too early to say, but the feel I have at the moment is that the Group Approach we have bought is 1) great for the group identification and feeling,

- 2) adequate in terms of early smoking responses,
- 3) inappropriate and of little advantage to hypertension control,
- 4) of questionable efficacy in diet modification.

I consider it crucial that we collect all intervention cholesterol data and where possible a call-back of randomly-assigned pretest Usual Care groups in all operating areas to compare with the intervention cholesterol values. Our pretest Special Care fall was 14 mg.%, but our pretest Special Care-Usual Care difference was only 4 mg.%. It is essential that we determine early intervention experience rather than waiting for the 1-year results; the battle is won, I believe, in the first quarter of intervention. I hope the next Task Force will consider such data and be chaired by you.

I think it may be that individual diet intervention is required early. We have found this a natural need around visit 4 or 5. Or else we must be far sharper in our ability to diagnose early and correct individual errors and deficiencies in the group situation.

W. McFate Smith, M.D.

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It is a serious omission when the Hypertension Committee is not represented in the Intervention Task Force Meeting.

Regards,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.

HB:jp

encl. - *protect report*

cc: O. Paul

C. Kaelber

*J. Stamler .*