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NAS - corresp
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Christopher Howson, Ph.D.
Project Director
National Academy of Science
Diet and Health Study
National Research Council
2101 Constitution Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20418

Dear Chris:

Enclosed is a start on some of the issues we've discussed in regard to competing risk and quantification of the public health impact of the diet recommendations. It is little more than a listing now but it might be useful to circulate it to a few people for reactions and assignments to be fleshed out.

This is to let you know that I've consulted Eleanor Williams in terms of some of the obvious issues omitted here in regard to calcium, iron intake and specific subgroups at risk from dietary change. I have also stimulated the curiosity of some young colleagues to explore further potential quantitative estimations of impact. I doubt that we will get much support for quantifying further the diet-cancer relationship, though I will seek John Potter's and others' reaction to Tony Miller's contribution included within this section.

I can promise you (eventually) a specific computation of the possible effect of lowering blood cholesterol on the risk of hemorrhagic stroke. I would imagine that people would prefer that we leave the issue of overall reduction of cardiovascular disease rates in generalities, as we've done here, but it's conceivable we could find a few more illustrative examples and graphs about cancer and overall mortality risk.

I have finally encountered a series of notes made to myself in San Francisco, including a number of specific assignments in regard to Chapter 7 and others. They were rather minor, having to do with lead-in paragraphs, the definition and reliability of lipoproteins and apolipoproteins, separating the effect on HDL and LDL within clinical trials, considering the strengths and weaknesses of absolute values versus ratios, mention of how LDL is a calculated value rather than measured and the reconsideration of Peto data on synthesis. I guess now that I've discovered these and have them in hand, I would prefer to wait on most of them until we get the Goodman-McGill edited version of Chapter 7. I've circulated the Peto preprint to Bailar, Shekelle and McGill. I am afraid Peto may not have provided either the discussion or the documentation that some feel we need to use

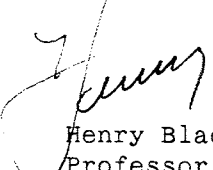
his materials and graphs. We'll have to await the judgement of others whether they should be included. I favor using them.

I found a note to myself on documenting the fat and cholesterol relationship to rheumatic fever, which I will proceed to do with Ed Kaplan locally.

I noted that Ken Carroll in San Francisco promised to reconcile his Cancer Section of Chapter 7 with John Potter's critique I forwarded some time ago. I don't believe he has yet done that, and to avoid issues further down the line, you might encourage him to do so. I think Geoff Howe's comments might be arriving at some of Potter's issues but Geoff's comments were specifically directed toward conclusions and recommendations rather than to the review of evidence in Chapter 7. I would encourage you to encourage Howe, Miller and Carroll and Kolonel to agreement on the fat/cancer section in Chapter 7, as well as on the newly raised issue of increased carbohydrate consumption.

There are still some loose ends in regard to Chapter 4 (5?) and Chapter 20, I believe in terms of transferring the prevalence in trends material out of Chapter 20. I hoped that you had volunteered to do that. I also noted that you volunteered to write an introductory section on prevalence and trends for all of the disease oriented chapters. I think that would be a healthy and useful contribution!

Cordially,


Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

/ma

cc: J. Bailar
A. Motulsky
D. Goodman
R. Shekelle

*Sent
2/25
mg*

enclosure

bpc: H. McNeill