

THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY*

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The main objective of the American Cancer Society is to control cancer through a comprehensive programme, which includes educating the public to seek medical advice at the earliest opportunity, keeping the medical profession informed on current advances in the cancer problem, supporting facilities for early diagnosis and treatment, and assisting cancer research on a nation-wide basis. This programme is supported entirely by public subscriptions, which today exceed 20 million dollars annually.

The Society comprises 60 divisions grouped together into 7 geographical regions. These divisions, the key units of the Society, are controlled from the national headquarters in New York by a Board of Directors (28 laymen and 28 professional men) who represent the country on a geographical basis, and, with the headquarters offices, formulate general policy and plan and develop cancer programmes on a national level (including professional education, education of the public, professional and lay service to the public and cancer patients, and cancer research). The programmes are put into operation by the divisions under medical supervision and with the closest possible cooperation of the medical profession.

Professional Education

To keep the medical profession informed on current knowledge concerning detection, diagnosis and treatment of cancer, the Society publishes the following:

1. 'CA—A Bulletin of Cancer Progress'. This is a bi-monthly publication of cancer abstracts. During 1954, 'CA' was distributed gratuitously to 65,000 medical practitioners.

2. 'Cancer', a bi-monthly professional publication, is sent on a complimentary basis to most of the medical schools and hospital libraries in the country.

3. 'Cancer Current Literature', a monthly listing of current articles on cancer in the world's literature, is indispensable to research workers and clinicians interested in the cancer problem. It is obtainable for a nominal annual fee.

4. The cancer section in *Experta Medica*, a monthly review of digests and abstracts of important articles from the world's literature of cancer, is also sent free to most of the United States medical school and hospital libraries.

Monographs. The Society is producing a series of authoritative monographs on cancers of specific organs, including, e.g., *Cancer of the Oesophagus and the Stomach*, *Cancer of the Lung*, *Carcinoma of the Breast*. These have been distributed free to practically every physician and medical student in the country. A similar monograph on *Mouth Cancer* was prepared for the dental profession.

Lists of medical speakers, motion pictures, lantern slides and prepared exhibits for medical meetings are always available. A series of excellent movie films (many in full colour) on the problem of the early diagnosis of cancer, has been produced with the collaboration of the National Cancer Institute. They include *Breast Cancer*, *Gastro-intestinal Cancer*, *Uterine Cancer*, *Oral Cancer*, *Lung Cancer*, and *Cancer—The Problem of Early Diagnosis*. There is also a film on *Exfoliative Cytology, a Method in Diagnosis*, and two films entitled *What is Cancer?* and *From one Cell*.

Cancer refresher courses are arranged periodically for general practitioners, and opportunities for post-graduate study is also made available through fellowships and traineeships in clinical cancer. Advanced training for the specialist is similarly provided through fellowships in particular fields. Moreover, special grants are available to support worth-while educational projects such as the publication of medical books and laboratory manuals, and the preparation of films.

An important function of the Society is its leadership in the staging of national and local conferences in which leading specialists in particular forms of cancer meet to discuss specific aspects of the disease, or to evaluate latest practical developments. The *Proceedings* of the First and the Second National Cancer

Conferences of 1949 and 1952 have been published and form valuable sources of information on many aspects of cancer.

Education of the Public

The Society, as one of its primary objectives, endeavours to provide sufficient knowledge about cancer to everyone so that prompt and efficient action against the disease may be taken at the earliest possible opportunity.

As a means of overcoming ignorance of the facts, misconceptions of the disease, superstitions and unfounded fears, countless pamphlets on various aspects of cancer, or warnings against quack cancer curers, are constantly being distributed. For the same purpose motion pictures are shown, exhibits are displayed in public places, medical speakers are provided for special meetings, and much propaganda is made over the wireless and television stations, or through the newspapers and posters.

The following is a list of excellent motion pictures (mostly in colour) presenting basic facts to the public, while at the same time offering them messages of hope and dispelling fear: *Man Alive*, treats the subject of cancer and the psychology of fear; *The Warning Shadow* on lung cancer; *Traitor Within*, an animated cartoon on the story of cancer; *Living Insurance*, advising regular physical examination for cancer detection; *You, Time and Cancer*, *Time is Life*, and *The Doctor Speaks His Mind*, are all films stressing the necessity for early diagnosis; *Crusade*, the story of the American Cancer Society; *Miracle Money*, showing the activities and exposure of a quack doctor treating cancer; *Breast Self Examination*, for women's groups. All these films are extensively used throughout the country.

Although most of this propaganda is aimed at the adult population in the so-called 'cancer age-group', attempts are also constantly being made to educate the younger generations in the high schools and universities on the basic facts of cancer.

Professional Service to the Public

The American Cancer Society encourages and assists in the establishment of adequate cancer clinics for diagnosis and treatment. Programmes for cancer detection, whether in special clinics or in doctors' surgeries are supported. It does not supply medical or laboratory facilities in cancer, nor does it treat patients.

Owing to the prohibitive costs entailed in equipping and maintaining special Cancer Detection Clinics, the Society is stimulating a nation-wide programme for cancer detection in the doctor's consulting rooms. This is popularly known as 'The Five-Point Cancer Detection Scheme', the slogan of which is: 'Every Doctor's Office a Cancer Detection Centre'.

The *Five-Point Cancer Detection Scheme* consists of the routine physical examination of presumably well persons, special attention being paid to the following 5 situations: (1) the skin and lymph nodes, (2) the oral cavity, (3) the breasts, (4) the genitalia, and (5) the rectum. It is estimated that by this examination approximately 60% of all cancers should be detected. Participating doctors are encouraged to keep records for statistical purposes on uniform cards supplied for the purpose. The fees for indigent patients are paid by the Society.

Cancer Information Services are maintained by the local Divisions, and these form an essential link in the chain of cancer control. Their function is to provide the public with general information on cancer, including the available local services to which cancer patients can be referred; no medical advice as such is tendered.

Service to Cancer Patients

Inasmuch as they help the cancer sufferers and their families to face the difficult physical, emotional and financial burdens of a long-term illness, *voluntary lay service* to cancer sufferers and their families form an important part of the activities of the American Cancer Society's local divisions. These services include the making and distribution of dressings to domiciliary cancer patients; providing transport to and from hospitals and clinics; maintaining loan and gift centres from which patients can obtain sickroom equipment and comforts; maintaining a home-visitor service through which trained volunteers perform helpful non-

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professional duties in the homes of cancer sufferers during convalescence; assisting rehabilitation after operations for cancer.

Cancer Research

It is the firm policy of the American Cancer Society to allocate not less than 25% of the collected funds to cancer research. The Society, however, does not own laboratories or conduct research, but serves as an administrator for the money assigned for the purpose.

Applications for grants, fellowships and scholarships are considered and evaluated by the Committee on Growth of the National Research Council of America, upon whose recommendation the necessary funds are made available—usually on an annual basis. Since the exact nature of cancer is unknown, basic research is fostered in many scientific fields, including biology, biochemistry, biophysics, chemotherapy, and in clinical investigations. In some cases the Divisions of the Society also render financial support to local research projects.

Epidemiological studies are conducted to determine the exact conditions under which some cancers are to be found and to discover new factors which may control the disease. The Society also collects accurate statistical data on cancer and renders consultative service in the analysis of such data to research workers in hospitals and elsewhere.

Allocation of Funds

In the annual allotment of the funds collected by the Society, priority is given to educational and research purposes. Only a small proportion is set aside for direct service or financial aid to individual cancer patients.

The contributed funds are usually spent as follows:

25%: In nationally planned cancer research projects.

15%: For the production of educational material (exhibits, journals, pamphlets, books, movies, etc.); fellowships in clinical cancer; library; statistical; administrative; publicity; fund raising; consultative services.

60%: Stays in the Division for its cancer programme.

A typical Budget is that of the Alleghany County Unit of the American Cancer Society in Pittsburgh. During 1953 the collected funds, which far exceed the required quota, totalled \$286,362. This money was spent as follows:—

	\$
<i>Research:</i> Local and nation-wide projects	71,590
<i>Service:</i> Aids to the Unit's cancer patients and their families, services rendered by local institutions, improvements of services at local treatment centres by purchase of apparatus, etc.	54,383
<i>Education:</i> Provision of the latest information to the general public and the medical profession	52,275
<i>National Headquarters:</i> To help pay for production of films, pamphlets, printed material, etc.	42,954
<i>Pennsylvania Division:</i> Contribution to state-wide programmes in co-operation with the Cancer Commission of the Pennsylvania State Medical Society	28,637
<i>Campaign:</i> To pay for materials, supplies and temporary personnel of the Unit's special appeal	25,783
<i>Administration:</i> Cost of planning and operating all local programmes	10,740
<i>Total</i>	<u>286,362</u>