

PROPOSED MEDICAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The final page of the draft Smoking and Health Research brief refers to a proposed conference of medical research scientists.

This was a suggestion of Dr. Jim Hong, Associate Professor of Pathology McGill U., being his personal view as a medical research worker. Since the draft was written the idea was discussed with Dr. Peter Macklem, Director Meakins-Christie Laboratory, who concurred with the merit of the suggestion and volunteered his help.

It was agreed that smoking, as an established fact of life, is a fitting subject for fundamental medical research. In fact understanding of the mechanisms by which smoke affects bodily cells could aid general understanding of causation of certain diseases, even from agents other than smoke. Thus smoke in a sense provides a good laboratory material to use to explore disease causation as affected by "pollution" in general.

Both Dr. Hong and Dr. Macklem pointed out that the best research is that which contains a good fit between the skills, ingenuity and personal motivation of the researcher, and the program

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required. A researcher wants to "do his own thing", but is willing to undertake sponsored "mission oriented" research provided his particular role is compatible with his own set of values and talents.

Dr. Macklem felt it would be desirable to invite a small group of medical scientists who are eminent in a number of different branches of research. He believes strongly in the benefits of inter-disciplinary analysis of problems, and that with adequate preparation the proposed conference could stimulate the formulation of specific research proposals. It is most important that the conference be organized under the auspices of respected scientists.

The structure and sponsorship of the conference would need to be explored carefully with senior officials of the Dept. of National Health and Welfare as well as Dr. Macklem and his associates.

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May 30/73

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