

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

THE NEWSLETTER OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM

"We will demand of ourselves and the Federal Government, in general, that we put our own house in order."



"We are creating a special industry group . . . to develop and stimulate industry programs to provide health education and preventive health care for employees at every level and their families." *Excerpts from a White House Report on Health Care Needs, July 10, 1969.*

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DRUG ABUSE EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

Perhaps the most effective weapon against the spread of drug misuse and abuse in this country is a massive well-designed coordinated network of community drug education and information programs. The fight against drugs requires the education and commitment of every segment of society. No one can escape the tragic effects of drug abuse and certainly no one should be denied the opportunity to learn more about the drug scene and the tremendous implications it has for the future. We must be persuaded to accept the responsibility we share in the campaign to destroy this demon before it siphons off all the hope we have placed in the future of our society and its youth. The "drug trip" for many young people has become a final voyage from which there is no promised return. For many, the wounds remain open sores erupting periodically to remind them of the terrors of a time past. Though the physical cure is attainable, the psychological recovery for many will become a lifelong struggle.

In an attempt to meet the unprecedented demands of this complex social problem many educators are beginning to recognize that total community participation and commitment is vital if we are to win the war against drugs. The community, however, must deal with the drug problem in its entirety and avoid focusing upon drugs as the problem per se. Drug abuse must be recognized as a social problem for which we all must be held accountable. One of the best sources currently available to those interested in organizing community action groups is a publication entitled *Common Sense Lives Here: A Community Guide to Drug Abuse Action*. The Handbook has been prepared by and is available at a cost of \$2.00 from the National Coordinating Council on Drug Abuse Education and Information, Suite 212, 1211 Connecticut Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20036. The National Coordinating Council is a private nonprofit organization working to combat drug abuse through education and information. Its membership includes more than 85 national governmental, professional, educational, law enforcement, service, religious, and youth organizations. In addition, the Council is extending affiliation membership to regional, State, and local organizations working in the area of drug abuse education and information.

For those interested in obtaining additional information about the whole span of drug education information, the Council also sponsors a Drug Abuse Information Service, *Grassroots*. The National Coordinating Council will provide new updated drug abuse information on a monthly basis and will offer this information to conveniently fit a three ring loose leaf binder notebook which will be provided tabbed and indexed for easy reference. In this manner the subscriber is assured the most up-to-date and easily accessible knowledge on the subject of drug abuse. The first issue of *Grassroots* includes the following items:

1. Who's Who in National Organizations
2. Who's Who in State Organizations
3. Who's Who in Federal Agencies
4. Back Issues of "If" National Newsletter on Latest Developments in Drug Abuse
5. First Comprehensive Evaluation of Drug Abuse Films
6. Literature Resource List
7. Extensive Bibliography
8. Status of Federal Drug Abuse Legislation
9. Selected Samples of Pamphlets and other Literature
10. Drug Abuse in Industry

The Drug Abuse Information Service is offered at the fixed cost of \$60 per year. Group rates are also available on request. For complete description of the service, address requests to the National Coordinating Council.

Up to 224,000 civilian employees of the Federal Government may be alcoholics whose sickness is costing the taxpayer more than \$300 million a year. Comptroller General Elmer B. Staats said in a special report, however, that this loss could be wiped out with an alcoholism control program costing just \$15 million a year.

Senator Harold Hughes, D-Iowa, Chairman of a subcommittee on alcoholism, noted in a statement that the report dealt only with the approximately 2.9 million civilian employees of the Government. If the alcoholism program were extended to include the 3.5 million Federal employees who are in the Armed Forces, the potential savings would be more than double what is projected in this report. Nevertheless, said the Senator, the report provides for the first time a dollars-and-cents figure of the mammoth costs that alcoholism and problem drinking inflict on the nation's largest employer, the Federal Government.

The report was released through Senator Hughes while a House subcommittee is considering legislation to provide comprehensive prevention and treatment of alcoholism. The Civil Service Commission has distributed copies of the complete report to the heads of agencies. Those wishing to obtain the report should address requests to the United States General Accounting Office, Reports Distribution Section, 441 G Street NW., Washington, D.C. 20548. When addressing requests refer to report number B-164031 (2) dated September 28, 1970.

DIRECTORY OF DRUG TREATMENT AGENCIES

Many requests have come into this office for information concerning the location of community treatment centers for drug addiction. For those who wish to locate treatment agencies around the country an excellent *Directory of Narcotic Addiction Treatment Agencies in the United States* has been prepared by the National Institute of Mental Health. A total of 183 treatment programs in 41 States was located in the survey. The information presented in the Directory focuses primarily on the treatment approaches and programs of the Federal, State, Municipal, and private agencies. The report includes descriptive summaries of the Federal, State, and Municipal systems currently operational, and the large number of individual agencies providing services for narcotic addicts.

This report is the first of two directories in the drug abuse-dependence area sponsored by the National Institute of Mental Health. The first Directory is limited to programs focused specifically on the treatment of narcotic addiction. The other, which will be completed in mid-1971, will present a comprehensive record of all agencies in this country that provide prevention, education, referral, or treatment services in relation to abuse of as well as dependence on the entire spectrum of illicit drugs. Copies of the *Directory of Narcotic Addiction Treatment Agencies in the United States* may be obtained by writing the National Clearinghouse for Mental Health Information, WT-240, 5454 Wisconsin Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015.

THE VALUE OF PERIODIC HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

Statistics compiled by Dr. Norbert Roberts at the University of Pennsylvania regarding the value of periodic health examinations in preventing death and disease have recently come to our attention.

In a 14-year period, over 20,000 males, mostly in managerial positions, had periodic health examinations. Of these, 14,000 were examined an average of 4.4 times over the 14 year period. The death rate of this test group was then compared with death rates of three control groups; (1) U.S. white males, (2) U.S. white males in professional, technical, and administrative jobs, and (3) the insurance category of the preferred risk U.S. male, the most selective group as all individuals undergo a medical examination prior to entering the category.

The comparison of death rates showed that the test group with periodic health examinations had a death rate 54% below that of the average U.S. male, 52% below that of the U.S. male in a comparable vocational group and 19% below that of the U.S. male who is a preferred insurance risk. This information has been reprinted with the permission of Joseph H. Frankel of L. M. Rosenthal and Co. Inc., New York.