

Social Science Research Council

230 Park Avenue, New York 17, N. Y.

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Preventive medicine

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John M. Weir, M. D.
Rockefeller Foundation
49 W. 49 Street
New York, New York

JUN 6 1957

JmW	April 10, 1957
gcb	

Dear Jack:

I am delighted that April 23 is a good date for you.

You will see from Stan King's minutes, when they reach you, that we had a long and interesting discussion leading toward the Conference that we have been considering. I was left with the job of preparing a first draft of a document to be used in crystallizing our own views and, when appropriately shored up, as a basis for a grant request. To keep the mill rolling, I have produced such a draft and attach it herewith.

Blanks have been left on page 3 with the expectation of filling them with material that Margaret Klem is supplying.

I hope that you will find time to review it carefully from all stand-points, including content, form, omissions and implications. On April 23 we can review it from there and other angles. If you have any suggestions or comments that can reach me by April 18, they can be incorporated in a redraft in time for the meeting on April 23. Otherwise, I suggest that you bring comments and suggested modification to the meeting on April 23 in as precise and finished a form as possible in order to expedite discussion.

It is also suggested that you come prepared to suggest names of participants in the proposed Conference so that we can develop a tentative Conference list as a basis for further planning. Also, please give consideration to possible candidates for the staff job.

Sincerely yours,

Van

H. van Zile Hyde, M. D.
Chairman

Committee on Preventive Medicine
and Social Science Research

Address reply to:
Division of International Health
Public Health Service
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Washington 25, D. C.

JUN 6 1957

0200

SSRC

Preventive medicine

EXPLORATORY CONFERENCE ON PREVENTIVE MEDICINE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

A Project Proposal

4/10/57

Proposer

The Committee on Preventive Medicine and Social Science Research of
the Social Science Research Council.

Members

Hugh R. Leavell, Harvard University, Chairman
H. van Zile Hyde, Public Health Service, Chairman ad interim
Leona Baumgartner, New York City Department of Health
Stanley H. King, University of Pittsburgh
Benjamin D. Paul, Harvard University
Lyle Saunders, University of Colorado
Leo W. Simmons, Yale University
John M. Weir, Rockefeller Foundation
Donald Young, Russell Sage Foundation

Goals

The proposed project contemplates the convening of a relatively small exploratory conference of leaders in public health and the social sciences for the purpose of a) identifying areas in which social science research may be expected to contribute toward the solution of problems of concern to public health; b) identifying areas in public health that provide promising opportunities for significant basic research in the social sciences; c) enhancing understanding and communication, as well as, creating active personal relationships between leaders in public health and the social sciences; d) stimulating specific joint research projects; e) determining further lines of action that might be expected to broaden and intensify social science research activity in public health field, considering in particular the possible value of a subsequent expanded conference more widely representative of public health and the social sciences.

Background

Broad Problems in Public Health which have Special Social Science Relevance

The Committee's study of the problems facing public health today suggest that there are four broad areas of concern to public health in which social science research might be particularly productive. They are not new areas but take on increasing importance as public health adjusts itself to the new problems that are emerging into the foreground as infectious disease is brought largely under control. At the same time they are areas in which one or more of the social sciences have developed useful research techniques. These areas are:

- a) The processes determining multiple individual decisions in reference to a short-term, or "one shot," program.

Public health, from time to time, has occasion to offer a one shot service whose total community value is dependent upon large numbers of persons deciding to avail themselves of the proffered service. Recent examples are the Salk vaccine and mass x-rays of the chest. In view of the intensity of research in the biologic aspects of disease such opportunities can be expected to arise in the future, in, for example, the need for the early detection of specific signs of disease or the application of new mass preventive measures.

Relevant areas of social science research, in which effective techniques have been developed, might well include study of the effects on the decision-making processes of the individual of realistic and unrealistic beliefs concerning disease, religious beliefs, attitudes and beliefs concerning health, conscious and unconscious fear of illness, level of education and degree of community participation.

b) Processes determining multiple individual decisions regarding the use and non-use of continuing comprehensive services.

With aging and the concomitant increase in problems of chronic disease and mental ill health continuing observation and care become important measures in prevention of breakdown and in rehabilitation. Services are being increasingly provided by government, unions, insurance plans and others. The value of such services is entirely dependent upon their utilization. Failure of utilization is emerging as a serious problem. (2 examples to be included)

Relevant areas of social science research include those given above but include as well the relationship between utilization and accessibility of services, effects of physical arrangements, personnel attitudes, influence of doctor-patient relationships, prestige factors, payment and non-payment, and patients' evaluation of significance of service.

Certain relevant studies of special significance are:

c) Processes determining community decisions

Public health advancement often requires that a community decide to introduce or extend a specific measure or facilities. No matter how meritorious they may be such actions may encounter strong and unreasoning

opposition. Organized minorities constituted of quacks and "agin-ers" may effectively frustrate the will of the majority. The recent experience in the efforts to introduce the flouridation of community water supplies has brought this problem into clear focus in many communities throughout the country. A number of excellent descriptive analyses of community experiences with the efforts to introduce flouridation have been prepared and published. Flouridation has dramatized a problem that is inherent in every action--including routine budget requests--that is taken or proposed by a health officer, whose basic job is to obtain favorable community decisions on measures considered to be in the general community interest.

Some of the major health moves of the future will demand sweeping community decisions that can be expected to engender potent opposition. The solution of problems of water and air pollution, both involving large economic, industrial and commercial aspects, will require community decisions on a wide basis, crossing many established jurisdictional lines.

Relevant areas of social science research include study of community power structure; mass educational processes with particular reference to technical education; motivations, organization and methods of negatively oriented action groups; community attitudes and expectations regarding social progress; relationships between professional groups and community opinion; political action processes in urban regions; attitudes of industry regarding community responsibility; etc.

d) Community organization for the delivery of health services

Two fundamental changes are taking place, both of which operate to create difficult new problems in the development of public health. One is the shift in the basic nature of the health problem ^{from} ~~for~~ communicable disease,

which has been controlled largely by mass application of simple techniques, to problems of aging, chronic disease and mental ill health, all of which require decisions and continuing action by the individuals affected. The second factor is the fundamental change that is occurring in the fusing of metropolitan centers into urban regions in which existing jurisdictional lines, community services, public utilities, tax structures and other basic elements of community existence become anachronistic as a framework for meeting the needs of the total community. Public health needs to develop the organizational concepts and structures that can deliver the needed services within the newly developing community structures.

Relevant social science research would include the disciplines of political science, sociology and economics that are studying the changing scene of community organizations and local governments and the new governmental and administrative devices--e.g. commissions and authorities--that are being developed. Further relevant research would include studies of community experience with varying organizational approaches to the problems of aging, long-term illness and rehabilitation to determine principles that would be valid within any over-all governmental framework.

Proposed Conference

The Committee considers that the desired goals could be met through a conference organized as follows:

Participants: The Committee proposes that the conferees consist of thirty individuals, 15 selected from public health and 15 from the social sciences, chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

Public Health Participants - These should consist of public health administrators who have, in general, evidenced prior understanding of and sympathy with the social sciences. They should be sensitive and critically inclined persons currently facing practical problems with social science relevance. They should be drawn from various levels of government, non-governmental organizations, private foundations and industry and should be in a position to facilitate the type of research under consideration (see appended list of proposed names).

Social Science Participants - These should consist of persons who have some prior knowledge of public health problems and practices and who are actively engaged in research relevant to the areas that will be considered at the conference. They should be drawn from the fields of sociology, social psychology, economics, political science and social anthropology.

Duration: Discussions held by the Committee with experts from the relevant fields of interest have indicated that the material and experience is extensive and could serve as a basis for fruitful discussion over a considerable span of time. The Committee has accepted five days as a realistic proposal from the standpoint of time that participants might be able to devote to this purpose and considers that the subject matter of the conference could be explored in considerable depth during that period.

Place: In view of the need to overcome communication barriers it is considered to be particularly important that the conference be held at a place where the conferees will have a maximum opportunity for personal contact with a minimum of outside distraction. Places under consideration include Colorado, Bermuda, White Sulphur Springs, Arden House.

Time: The Committee proposes the Conference be held in the early spring of 1958.

Arrival: Plans would provide for arrival on the day preceding the opening of the Conference with a social get-together planned for that evening.

Opening: It is proposed that an opening session of the total group be given a review, by a Committee spokesman, of the Conference and be addressed by a recognized leader in public health and a similar leader in the social sciences, each to set the stage for the Conference from his particular vantage point.

Group: It is proposed that the Conference be organized into four mixed groups, each including seven or eight participants drawn from the several professions represented at the Conference. The groups would be asked to explore the research potential under each of the four broad topics discussed above, one of the topics being discussed concurrently each day by each group with a reporting session and general discussion being held each evening. The final day would be used for a general summing up, evaluation and consideration of future steps for furthering the objectives of the Conference.

Report: There would be no effort to produce a report for publication, but the group reports would be collated and annotated on the basis of the general discussions and would be available to all members of the group and others with special interest. The report would be considered as a Committee working document for future planning and action.

Preparation for Conference

The Committee considers that the value of the Conference will be proportionate to the thought and effort that goes into its preparation. The present proposal represents an initial phase of preparation for the Conference and reflects the consideration that has been given this matter intermittently over the past three years, and more intensively during the past few months. In addition to its own exploration of the matter the Committee has reviewed areas of possible substantive content of the Conference with experts it has invited to meet with it for this purpose. These discussions of specific topics have lead to the definition of the broad areas that are proposed above for consideration by the Conference. The topics that have been reviewed for this purpose by the Committee and the expert who discussed it with the Committee are:

Chronic Disease and Aging - Clark Tibbetts
Chairman, Committee on Aging
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

Use and Non-use of Available Services - John Grant
Rockefeller Foundation
Miss Margaret Klem
N.Y. City Department of Health

Flouridation - Bernard Mausner
University of Pittsburgh

Subject areas that have been similarly reviewed by the Committee and a number of invited guests, primarily in another context, but which have been taken into full account in planning the proposed Conference are:

Medical Institutions in Sociological Perspective - Albert F. Wesson
Yale University

Intercultural Health Programs - George Foster
University of California

The Community and Its Processes in Relation to Health and Health

Programs

- Walter Book
New York State Department of Health

Some Effects of Social and Cultural Systems in Reactions to Stress

- William Caudill
Harvard University

Stress

- Stewart Wolf

Social Status and Public Health

- Ozzie Simmons
Harvard University

Some Directions for Research on Fertility Control in Underdeveloped

Areas

- J. Mayone Styces
St. Lawrence University

Fertility Dynamics and Cultural Inertia - Carl Taylor

Harvard University

Among those who have met with the Committee to discuss the research aspects of these subjects are: Pendelton Herring, Margaret Arnstein, Edward J. Stainbrook, Isabel Kelley, John J. Hanlon, Cecil Sheps, Solon Kimball, John Cassel, David G. Mandelbaum, A. Manson Meads, Jerome K. Myers, Margaret Rowen, Dudley Kirk, Forrest Linder, Irene Taenber, Andie Knutson.

Staff Preparation: The Committee considers that it will be necessary in order to insure the usefulness of the Conference, to have a social scientist carry on full time staff work for six months prior to the Conference and two weeks following it. His functions would be:

1) to develop, with such consultation and assistance as might be required and available, a basic staff paper on each of the four broad topics to be discussed by the Conference to serve as the take-off point for group discussion. Such papers would include a statement of the problem, a relevant case report and an annotated bibliography of major significant relevant research.

- 2) to supervise arrangements for the conference
- 3) to serve as secretary of the Conference and to prepare the final report.

Participation in Preparation

Committee: The Committee will be responsible for the success of the Conference and will meet as necessary in order to review and approve staff papers and Conference arrangements.

Related Activities

No Conference similar to that proposed herein has been held or is being planned by any group.

There has been in existence for the past two years a Joint Committee on Public Health and Behavioral Sciences representative of the following agencies:

American Anthropological Association
American Psychological Association
American Public Health Association
American Sociological Society
Health Information Foundation
Milbank Memorial Fund

The Joint Committee has been concerned primarily with action programs rather than research. It is undergoing a change of structure and is expected to become soon a Committee of the American Public Health Association. It is not planning any national Conference, but is planning to stimulate local workshops at which public health administrators will discuss local programs and problems with social scientists in the community.

Budget

The estimated costs of holding the proposed Conference are as set forth below.

Staff (6 months)	
Social scientist	\$ 3,000
Secretarial services	1,500
Communications	200
Travel	500
Meeting space	
1 large conference room (30 persons)	250
3 small conference rooms (10 persons)	300
Per diem allowance (30 persons @ \$25)	3750
Travel (15 round-trips N.Y. to San Francisco would equal \$4275)	<u>5,000</u>
Total	<u>\$14,500</u>

Place

At the suggestion of the Division of International Conferences, Department of State, contact has been established with Robert F. Warner, Inc. (Miss Lansdown--delightful British accent) who is forwarding material on conference sites but has furnished following tentative suggestions for a late April date:

San Marcus Hotel, Chandler, Arizona (20 miles from Phoenix)
Del Monte Lodge, Pebble Beach, Carmel, California
Inn at Rancho Santa Fe, 27 miles out of San Diego, California
Grand Hotel, Point Clear (near Mobile), Alabama
Edgewater Gulf, Edgewater Park, near Biloxi, Mississippi +
Broadmoor, Sun Valley, Idaho

3rd week June, 1958

To include 10 committee plus 30 guests = 40 persons.
Probable next meeting 20th June

HvZHyde
4/9/57