

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Information Dissemination is defined as the collection, analysis, and dissemination of information useful in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. In 1974, this definition was expanded to include the dissemination of information regarding nutrition programs for cancer patients and the relationship between nutrition and cancer.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION: A LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Review of congressional language regarding information dissemination from the enactment of the National Cancer Act of 1971 through the most recent reauthorization in December of 2006. Emphasis is placed on the evolving congressional definition of information dissemination, and recommendations and directives regarding the allocation of resources for information dissemination.

National Cancer Act of 1971 (P.L. 92-218)

To insure that the cancer research program remains an integral part of the overall biomedical research effort, the bill authorizes the Director of the Cancer Conquest Agency to *"take necessary action together with the Director of the National Institutes of Health so that all channels for the dissemination and cross-fertilization of scientific knowledge and information existing prior to the effective date of this Act between the National Cancer Institute and the other Institutes of Health shall be maintained between the Agency and the Institutes of Health to insure free communication between cancer and the other scientific, medical, and biomedical disciplines."* (Senate Report 92-247, p. 24).

The National Cancer Amendment 1974 (P.L. 93-352)

The Committee urges that the Director of the National Cancer Program be allowed to exercise his full statutory authority relative to the contract process and public information activities.

The Committee heard testimony from the Candlelighter's Association, which was confirmed by the Director of NCI, that the NCI's programs of support for nutrition were inadequate. Several specific projects to study the relationship between the nutritional status of cancer patients and their survival, and the relationship of diet to the cause of cancer were described. *However, indications were given that the NCI has not mounted a general program of collection and dissemination to people concerned with cancer and affected by its information about the relationship between nutrition and cancer.* For this reason the proposed legislation contains an amendment designed to encourage the Cancer Institute to improve its performance in these areas. (House Report 93-954, pp. 6-7, 12-15)

The Biomedical Research Extension Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-83)

Although much of the information dissemination function has been effectively accomplished with the addition of the Cancer Control Program and various data banks and public information section of the Institute, *there still remains a large gap in the area of disseminating new treatment and control methods to practicing health professionals, students in the health professions, and the general public.* The Committee *thus recognizes the importance and value of the role of the cancer prevention and control program and the cancer research and demonstration centers in this endeavor and gives its full support for the augmentation of the dissemination function through these programs.*

The Committee *reaffirms the need for continuing the momentum of the National Cancer Program so that cancer victims receive the benefits of the highest quality of health care that our present knowledge provides, as rapidly as new applications and information from research results can be translated to the health care provider.* Progress has been made since the National Cancer Act became law in 1971 and was amended in 1974. The operation of a viable, coordinated National Cancer Program must be maintained and strengthened. *Much more remains to be done and this Committee is determined to see the job to its conclusion.*

The Community Mental Health Centers Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-622)

Just as the committee recognizes that it is an essential part of the national cancer program to conduct and support research into the causes of cancer and the means for the prevention of cancer, *it also acknowledges that it is important to disseminate as soon as possible the results of such research not only to the general public but to physicians and other health professionals who treat and provide care for cancer patients. The value of such education and demonstration programs in the past has been considerable.* However, now, with the increased awareness of the presence of agents which may cause cancer in our immediate surroundings, in the food we eat and in the workplace, such educational programs become even more important. Since physicians provide the primary source of information and advice to the general public concerning health matters, *it is absolutely essential to sound public health practices that health professionals become aware, as soon as possible, of the latest research findings, particularly those that would allow their patients to lead healthier lifestyles and avoid exposure to situations which may enhance their risk of cancer.* Therefore, many of the amendments to the National Cancer Act included in H.R. 1234 *emphasize both continuing education programs for physicians and public information programs concerning the prevention and treatment of cancer.* (House Report 95-1192, pp. 21, 24-25)

The Health Program Extension Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-538)

Neither the House nor the Senate made comments regarding information dissemination.

The Health Research Extension Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-158)

Neither the House nor the Senate made comments regarding information dissemination.

Health Omnibus Programs Extension of 1988 (P.L. 100-607)

The Committee *commends the work of the Cancer Control program in disseminating useful information in this regard.* However, the Committee *feels that care needs to be taken to avoid duplication of effort by different branches of the public Health Service.* The Committee also believes *it is more appropriate for NIH Institutes to emphasize the dissemination of information to health professionals who would then offer that information to the public rather than attempt to become a resource for public education.* (Senate Report 100-363, p. 67)

The National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-43)

No recommendations from the House or Senate

The National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-482)

No recommendations from the House or Senate

