

addressed to the public, to the medical profession, and others; with the Bureau of Hearings and Appeals, to clear and coordinate proposed policies affecting the judicial process, to confer on regulations and rulings, and to arrive at agency positions in specific court cases; and with the Office of Program Evaluation and Planning to discuss matters of disability program improvement through legislative changes, as well as to react to their proposals from the viewpoint of operational feasibility.

Similar intensive coordination and cooperation prevail at the policy, planning, administrative, and operational levels in the administration and implementation of the health insurance provisions of the Social Security Act.

Overall program research and a statistical program are carried on by the Office of Research and Statistics, involving the coordination with and cooperation of the other components, such as BDPA, which is responsible for all data-processing activities. Another unit of ORS conducts, in cooperation with BDOO, a statistical system that provides a means of measuring and evaluating the way in which program policies are carried out in the processing and payment of claims for benefits.

*(b) With other units of the Department.—*

(i) Office of the Secretary: Close cooperation and coordination are required with the Office of the Secretary in the formulation of policies and legislative programs, in the development and clearance of research projects, and in technical details such as clearance of general and statistical forms. SSA personnel also serve on interdepartmental committees and on task forces as Department representatives.

(ii) Office of the General Counsel: There is a day-to-day relationship with the OGC on legal matters. This coordination is necessary to clear policies and procedures requiring legal clearance, to assure their conformity with the law and with congressional intent. Extensive dealings are also had with OGC in court cases involving OASDHI, primarily to assist in formulating the Department's defense of determinations.

(iii) Public Health Service: In the disability program, contacts are made with the PHS to take up problems involving medical standards for the adjudication of disability, medical report forms designed for the use of doctors, information materials aimed at the medical profession, research projects having medical content and other problems related to the disability program. In the health insurance program there will be numerous points of administrative contact with PHS. The more important of these will be the mutual involvement of PHS and SSA with the State agencies in setting standards for provider certification and in setting overall policy for assuring continuous adherence to such standards.

Also SSA and PHS work closely together in developing and carrying out related research and survey programs. Under the new health insurance program the SSA is directed to plan, on a continuing basis, with the PHS and the Welfare Administration for statistical programs designed to meet the needs of constituents and interested voluntary agencies.

SSA also works extensively with the National Center for Health Statistics (PHS) to obtain reliable public records of births, deaths, marriages, divorces, etc., needed to administer the social security