

There are only 12,000 trained pediatricians and 13,000 obstetricians in the United States today—far too few to provide adequate medical care for all our children and mothers.

Our health goals for children cannot be met unless we develop new patterns of health care. This will require the great energy and skill of the American medical profession. New types of health workers must be trained to help our doctors do more. We must use more effectively the health manpower we have. Above all, the health profession should be encouraged to invent and innovate to give every child the medical care he needs.

I recommend legislation to authorize 10 pilot centers this year to provide research and development in child health care, to train health workers, to test new methods and to provide care for 180,000 needy children and 10,000 mothers.

These new centers will be associated, wherever possible, with medical universities or neighborhood health centers. They will—

Train new types of health workers to assist the pediatrician and obstetrician.

Design and develop more efficient methods and techniques of health care delivery.

Provide needed maternal and child health care.

In addition, I am directing the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to allocate increased funds to help train more pediatricians, obstetricians, and family doctors.

MENTAL RETARDATION

Each year more than 125,000 infants are born mentally retarded. This dread disability strikes rich families and poor. The tragedy of mental retardation affects the child, the parents, and the entire community.

In 1958, the late Congressman from Rhode Island, John E. Fogarty, introduced legislation which launched our attack on mental retardation.

For the past 3 years we have intensified that attack on all fronts—in prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, employment, recreation services.

But today, America still lacks trained workers and community facilities to carry on the fight.

I recommend legislation to—

Provide, for the first time, Federal support to assist the staffing of community mental retardation centers.

Extend Federal support for the construction of university and community centers for the mentally retarded.

DENTAL NEEDS

Nearly two out of three disadvantaged children between the ages of 5 and 14 have never visited a dentist. They have five times more decayed teeth than their more fortunate classmates.

To begin meeting the dental needs of poor children, I recommend legislation to—

Authorize a pilot program of dental care for 100,000 children in areas of acute poverty.