

13486 COMPETITIVE PROBLEMS IN THE DRUG INDUSTRY

In conclusion, we consider that in the light of the UGDP findings, it remains with the proponents of the oral hyperglycemics [sic] to conduct scientifically adequate studies to justify the continued use of such agents.

V. RECENT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON SAFETY OF ORAL HYPOGLYCEMIC DRUGS

The more detailed report on the results of the phenformin study was published recently by the UGDP (ref. 20). In addition to the higher mortality from all causes and from cardiovascular causes observed in the phenformin-treated group compared to the other treatment groups, evidence was presented that phenformin therapy resulted in increased blood pressure levels and heart rate, thus suggesting possible mechanisms by which this drug might influence cardiovascular mortality.

Recently, additional reports relating to the safety of oral hypoglycemic drugs have appeared:

1. At hearings before the Subcommittee on Monopoly of the Select Committee on Small Business, U.S. Senate, on January 31, 1975, Dr. P. J. Palumbo reported that a retrospective study of diabetic patients treated at the Mayo Clinic suggests that survival was lower in those patients treated with oral hypoglycemic agents, compared to those patients treated with insulin. The full study has not yet been published.

2. A retrospective study of diabetic patients treated at the Joslin Clinic, reported in a doctoral thesis (ref. 23), can be interpreted as providing results that are consistent with those of the UGDP. This study has not yet appeared in the medical literature.