

Six: Repetition is necessary both for widespread awareness and for the maintenance of that awareness.

Seven: Conflict of information exists in most significant communications areas. It must be allowed for and dealt with.

Eight: In all areas there are barriers to persuasion. In the health care area these are frequently profoundly emotional and must be clearly understood before communications are undertaken; and

Nine: The relationship between stimulus and response must be clearly understood. A message is a stimulus, the receiver's reaction to that message is the response. Professional communications start by identifying the response that is desired from the target audience before developing the message. The desired response should dictate the message, not vice versa.

It is very dangerous to assume that your audience will receive your idea exactly as written. They will color it; they will change it; they will interpret it. In short, by making it their own, they can also make it different from what you intended.

Mr. GORDON. Dr. Simmons, may I interrupt you for a second?

At one time you were the Director of the FDA's Bureau of Drugs, and you had a lot to do with professional review organizations, too, the PRO's. During that time studies have shown that certain drugs have been misused and overused, and the FDA and its expert advisory committees have tried to change the prescribing habits of the medical profession.

What methods were and are being used by the FDA to try to accomplish this end?

Dr. SIMMONS. Mr. Gordon, it is difficult for me to answer that because, remember, I have been away from FDA for 3 years, and it would really be unfair for me to answer that question. I think that is more appropriately posed to the Bureau Director or somebody else. I assume they are at least using what we used at the time. I am not clear enough on what has been added to that armamentarium since that time. At that time, as you remember, we had warnings, regulations, drug bulletins, and sometimes press conferences, those traditional kinds of things. How much that has been buttressed since that time I do not know.

Mr. GORDON. All right.

I think it is about the same at this time, the FDA bulletins, Dear Doctor letters, FDA consumer messages.

Is it your opinion, then, that the methods now being used are inadequate and do not achieve the desired results?

Dr. SIMMONS. Well, I think you would have to answer the point question by question, frankly. In some areas, clearly, the information does get over; in some areas it does not get over. The drug industry has the same problem, you know, in getting the profession to understand the need to treat hypertension. Both Government and the pharmaceutical industry have been trying very hard to get across a very important and worthwhile message and it is a terribly difficult kind of a thing. So in that area, I would say both Government and the pharmaceutical industry have been less successful than would be warranted in the public interest. In others, you know, I think, as I said, case by case it would be easier for me to answer that.