

for a very few old drugs such as aspirin, drugs were being ordered by trade names rather than generic names; there were confusing duplications of drugs that had the same therapeutic action and that the pharmacy was in chaos attempting to keep multiple trade name equivalents of the same drug in stock. In addition, the hospital was spending as much as \$50,000 yearly for drugs which had no proved useful therapeutic action.

A few examples, many could be cited. The hospital was paying \$167 per 1,000—these are wholesale costs—for a trade name cortisone-type drug when a comparable generic product could be bought for \$6 per 1,000.

Senator NELSON. May I interrupt a moment here?

Dr. WILLIAMS. Yes.

Senator NELSON. Then you did change in your formulary to the comparable \$6 per 1,000 generic drug; is that correct?

Dr. WILLIAMS. Yes, we did.

Senator NELSON. And have the physicians in the hospitals observed any difference in the therapeutic effect of the \$6 per 1,000 versus \$167 per 1,000 drug?

Dr. WILLIAMS. None whatsoever.

Senator NELSON. So you are satisfied that the generic name was as good as the trade name you had been using.

Dr. WILLIAMS. As a matter of fact, there were later assays on these drugs published by the Medical Letter, who actually assayed them, and the drug we were using was as good.

Senator NELSON. Thank you.

Dr. WILLIAMS. They were paying \$22.50 per 1,000 for trade name Dexedrine when equivalent generic dextroamphetamine could be purchased for 71 cents per 1,000.

Senator NELSON. Wasn't Fulton County still purchasing dextroamphetamine as of the time of the hearings a month ago?

Dr. WILLIAMS. That is right. This is sort of a confusing error. The people in New York sent a questionnaire to the Fulton County purchasing agent, and they buy just a few drugs for the county jail, and they don't have any major drug usage. If the letter had gone to Grady Hospital, where most of the drugs are purchased, it would have been different. It caused a local stir in our papers, but it was a little unfair, because they were comparing a generic price in New York with a trade name price in Atlanta.

Senator NELSON. But Grady had already switched over to purchasing generic dextroamphetamine.

Dr. WILLIAMS. We switched from trade name Dexedrine to generic dextroamphetamine.

Senator NELSON. Did you find any difference in the therapeutic value of your generic dextroamphetamine versus Dexedrine?

Dr. WILLIAMS. None whatsoever. We were buying expensive antibiotics such as tetracyclines on a trade name basis. Now there were at the moment no generic tetracyclines available, but I want to make this point, because I would like to show during my testimony that it is possible to get the major drug firms to compete, if one goes about this properly.

But at the time we took over, they would just order one trade name tetracycline or another, and the prices were always the same, right