

INTRODUCTION

Since the Task Force on Prescription Drugs was formally established in June of 1967, members of the Task Force staff in cooperation with many governmental and nongovernmental consultants have examined various important aspects of drug production, distribution, and use.

These studies have included the health needs and prescription drug use of the elderly and other groups, the prescription drug industry, the drug distribution system, the prescribing patterns of physicians, drug quality, ongoing drug insurance programs in the United States and other countries, drug classification and coding, and drug utilization review.

Findings from these studies have been considered by the Task Force, and are summarized in the following sections, together with recommendations for action.

These proposals are not concerned with any specific drug program. They are directed toward producing the highest possible quality of health care, at the lowest practical cost, for all people.