

ONGOING PROGRAMS

The provision of out-of-hospital prescription drugs through governmental or private insurance programs has been undertaken in one form or another for nearly a century. Many of these include techniques and approaches which deserve consideration in any out-of-hospital program that might be designed under Medicare.

Accordingly, the Task Force has examined a wide variety of ongoing programs--all of the major drug programs conducted by the Federal Government, a number of selected State programs, six of the leading private programs in this country, and the major programs in eleven foreign countries.

These programs are not directly comparable. In some foreign countries, for example, national economic and social structures lend themselves to controls and methods of operation which are probably not suitable in the United States. Certain aspects of military drug programs may not be adaptable for civilian programs. Other approaches utilized in private programs may be impractical for a government operation.

Nevertheless, a study of these diverse systems has proved to be illuminating. It has clearly indicated