

UTILIZATION REVIEW

In any drug program, utilization review is a dynamic process aimed first at rational prescribing and the consequent improvement of the quality of health care, and second at minimizing needless expenditures.

In many hospitals, staff committees of experts have long taken the responsibility of reviewing the records of their fellow physicians and offering such advice or taking such disciplinary action as they deemed necessary. During the past two years, utilization review programs have been instituted to improve the quality of medical care under the hospital program of Medicare. Similar reviews are used in several American and foreign drug programs to improve the quality of drug prescribing.

It should be the responsibility of a program administration to institute a drug utilization review, and provide the necessary data and whatever statistical analysis may be required.

But the implementation--the establishment and improvement of guidelines, the provision for acceptable deviations, the limitation of irrational prescribing, the prevention of fraudulent practices, and other professional judgments--