

The new AMA Drug Compendium, increasing controls on advertising by the industry and the medical profession, increasing the ability of the FDA to review new drugs scientifically, education of the medical profession to a more critical evaluation of drug usage and efficacy, and an increased role of the professionally trained pharmacist all are steps which need to be taken to increase the quality of medical care.

IV. RELATIONSHIP OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION TO THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

The question of an unethical relationship between physicians and the pharmaceutical industry is always raised when the issue of abuses is raised. It is inconceivable to me that practicing physicians, often with incomes greater than \$30,000, would be swayed to any great degree by an autographed golf-ball or a cocktail party. The vast majority of medical students, as well, are either indifferent or critical about the overt blandishments of the pharmaceutical companies; and it is unlikely that future medical professionals would be involved in unethical schemes for \$500 worth of gratuities.

The problem in regards to the relationship of medical organizations and medical journals is quite complex but there has been little substantive evidence to show that there is an unethical relationship between the Editors of JAMA, *The New England Journal of Medicine*, the *American Journal of Medicine*, or the various AMA specialty journals and pharmaceutical companies.

Our Journal, *THE NEW PHYSICIAN*, has a student editorial staff whose policy for text is completely separated from that of the staff or policy of our advertising director. It is our policy to present a wide diversity of views, many unpalatable to the drug industry, independently of the rise and fall of publication income. There is no question that a pullout by pharmaceutical advertisers would hurt the Journal, but I can assure your Committee that we would continue to publish. More independently, there is no indication that the pharmaceutical industry has or would exert pressure of this sort with our Journal.

I would submit that the true relationship of the medical profession to the pharmaceutical industry is exceptionally poor. There appears to have been little meaningful communication between the pharmaceutical companies and physicians in regards to the basic ethical questions which now confront both groups. For example, only now are medical students and pharmaceutical management representatives beginning to discuss the joint professional and ethical responsibilities they share as part of the emerging health care team. The relationship of the physician and the pharmacist has long been a professional-commercial one and this, too, is beginning to undergo the necessary metamorphosis to a joint professional relationship with the best interests of the patient as a mutually understood and cooperative goal.

V. CONCLUSION

I have tried, as objectively as possible, to summarize our knowledge and feelings in the areas about which you have requested us to testify.

The Student American Medical Association is greatly concerned with the basic problems and issues which confront our profession and society in regards to health care. However, we would not be so arrogant as to presume we had a simple explanation, analysis, or solutions for these complex problems.

I know of no medical student who is well-informed enough, especially in the face of the enormous amount of expert testimony you have heard, to take an unyielding stand on either side of the incredibly complex issues your Committee is investigating. Nonetheless, our stands on specific and defineable issues are clear.

SAMA stands firmly behind obtaining the highest quality drugs at the lowest consumer cost and endorses only those promotional practices that either contribute to the knowledge of the physician or students or benefit the health care recipient.

SAMA also fully supports the development of a comprehensive drug compendium which includes generic as well as brand name cross-references and includes the wholesale price of each drug for the purpose of comparison by physicians.

We also support an increase in the screening and control facilities administered by the Food and Drug Administration to insure increased unbiased evaluation of new drugs.

The Student American Medical Association recognizes that there have been abuses in the drug industry, as well as in our own profession, in regards to