

ministration which began working on these problems in the summer of 1969.

Senator NELSON. Have any of those studies been completed?

Dr. STEINFELD. One of them has been completed. It is a Prescription Drug Data Summary, dated July 1970, and we have a copy of it here for the committee.

Senator NELSON. Prescription Drug Data Summary.

Dr. STEINFELD. Yes, sir.

Senator NELSON. What was that study about?

Dr. STEINFELD. It was a review of prices and utilization of drugs by ages of patients for the past several years, in hospitals and in outpatient care, by States, types of programs, and indicating the sales in terms of manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and so forth. And then it describes the drugs by various categories, whether for the central nervous system, neoplastic disease, infectious disease, et cetera.¹

It is primarily a fiscal summary which would be used along with other information for development of further policy.

Mr. GORDON. May we have a copy?

Senator NELSON. Your statement says "responsibility for conducting a continuing study of drug costs, average prescription prices, and drug use as suggested in the first and 22d recommendations was assigned to the Social Security Administration." Is this their continuing responsibility so far as task force recommendations were concerned?

Dr. STEINFELD. Mr. Chairman, we have a departmental task force working on drug utilization which takes into account drug cost, prescription price and drug use. This comprises people from SRS, SSA, FDA, the various agencies conducting research in health service delivery (the health service research and development activity in HSMHA), and our own office and we attempt to coordinate and correlate through this overall committee.

Senator NELSON. OK. Go ahead.

Dr. STEINFELD. Research on retail drug prices is being conducted through Social Security Administration-supported methodology studies which may permit measurement of the true economic costs associated with operation of prescription departments in community pharmacies. Findings from these studies are expected by the early part of February of this year.

Social Security Administration staff has conducted various studies related to drug product cost. Research includes analyses of drug industry pricing techniques as manifest in pharmaceutical procurement by Federal agencies (AID, DPSC, GSA, OEO, PHS, and VA) and selected local and State governmental units. In addition, studies are underway dealing primarily with economic issues on selected therapeutic categories. These deal with drug classes such as antibiotics, thiazide diuretics, corticosteroids, tranquilizers, oral antidiabetics, as well as Vitamin B₁₂.

Efforts will be made in the future to gather primary data which will permit a comparison to be made of the economic cost of pro-

¹ See pp. 8260-8288