

National Formulary, representatives of the National Academy of Sciences, officials of the Food and Drug Administration, and representatives of other federal agencies that have activities in this area of medical practice. In addition, we have continued to monitor the current literature in the field of drug treatment with special reference to observations and techniques used for the evaluation of therapeutic agents.

On the basis of these studies and observations, we believe that our current policy is a sound one. We realize, however, that we must continue and even intensify our efforts to secure valid information concerning the efficacy of drugs and to disseminate this information to our physicians. Also, we must continue to inform and supervise all of our staff personnel in methods calculated to obtain effective drugs and to assure that these are distributed and used safely and at minimal cost consistent with the principles of good medical practice.

Our policy on rational drug use is very simply stated in two parts:

1. Every reasonable effort should be made to treat all VA patients with the most effective therapeutic agents indicated, and at the most favorable price that can be obtained.
2. Since there are differences of opinion on the effectiveness of many drug products and also valid differences in approach to the selection of therapeutic regimens, we will not rigidly restrict professional practices by administrative direction.

We believe that the interests of sound medical practice are best served by efforts to assure that clinicians who treat VA patients have as much valid