

The issue of individual practice and corporate practice has been one that has been in the limelight for many years, as you know. I could give you a very good example, in the practice of medicine.

Mr. SISK. I was going to ask about that later. Let us take, for example, the general practitioner.

Whether or not you, as an employee of the corporation, drawing your salary from the corporation, and the average individual however dedicated that you might be, would feel that the doctor-patient relationship would be the same as to the public where he takes care of the patient? These are matters that we want to discuss with you.

Dr. HEATH. There are some very high class medical group health practices in the District of Columbia. I do not wish to mention their names, but I will say that we have a group of men in group practice who use a combination of the disciplines specialties.

They have sometimes more elaborate x-ray equipment, more medical equipment, because it is a bigger enterprise. The laboratory work is immediately available. A patient goes there to Dr. A, and he feels that a certain diagnostic test should be performed, and the patient just goes downstairs to the laboratory and the tests are made or the x-ray is made or some other specialized examination is made. Then, they prescribe for them.

If I may go off the record, please?

Mr. SISK. Yes.

(Discussion was had outside the record.)

Mr. SISK. We will now go back on the record.

Dr. HEATH. On the other hand, the individual physician can utilize specialized diagnostic services and consultations by sending his patient to certain laboratories, x-ray installations, and whatnot. I think it all comes down to the individual physician. In the group practices, in these centers, they have to be good. The patient has to be satisfied, otherwise, they will not last. And the group practice will not last. They have seminars and lectures and patient evaluation from time to time to keep all the men on their toes. I think that they are associated with their fellow physicians in a very close manner, and they talk very clearly about problems.

So, I think that you have more than one approach there.

I could not say that the group practice is not as good as individual practice.

Mr. SISK. Dr. Heath, let me say that I certainly agree with your views on group practices. I think we are speaking of the same thing. Maybe I did not make my question entirely clear. You understand, of course, the employment of physicians by non-profit groups such as health clinics.

Dr. HEATH. They are profit-making.

Mr. SISK. I beg your pardon?

Mr. HEATH. They are profit-making.

Mr. SISK. In group practices, there is a profit, however, there is an individual responsibility of the doctor to the patient.

Dr. HEATH. Yes, sir.

Mr. SISK. Does the patient pay the doctor, or the group?

Dr. HEATH. The bill is sent by the medical center.

Mr. SISK. What I have in mind here is the employment of a doctor, dentist, or an optometrist who is a specialist, as he specializes in just one thing and that is the eye. What about his employment by a profit-