

This is from the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness in the current year.

Like most other types of research, the significant findings are being made largely by highly trained and experienced workers and often by coordinated efforts of groups working on a common project.

Expensive laboratories with such costly equipment as computers, radiation counters, electron microscopes, and highly sophisticated electronic, chemical, and physical measuring devices are now routine.

The so-called basic research is best coordinated with clinical research in most types of projects. Thus, the medical school or teaching hospital provides the usual environment where the laboratory and equipment for basic research can be combined with clinical facilities and clinical subjects for research.

The trained manpower is usually more easily available in the medical school or teaching hospital.

However, the laboratory, the equipment, the trained manpower, and the clinical cases for eye research do not automatically occur in any institution. They are provided only by advance planning by some group of dedicated people able to obtain large sums of money and convert it into the ingredients of research.

Only about one-fourth of our medical schools have outstanding eye research facilities at the present time. Most of these have been provided largely by grants from the Federal Government, and most of these, incidentally, are found in the schools where the department is a separate, independent department and not a branch of some other specialty of medicine such as general surgery.

The grant system has helped to provide coordination of what research is now being conducted. Federal funds have also aided in training scientists to carry out research activities.

Results of research endeavor are now made available to the rest of the scientific community by papers presented at numerous professional meetings, and published in a great variety of technical journals.

ROLE OF NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGICAL DISEASES AND BLINDNESS

The National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness was established in 1951 with the thought of providing for research needs in both the neurological and ophthalmological fields.

Unfortunately, the name "blindness" connotes a negative approach of research in sight conservation.

Dr. William Hart was chief of the eye branch of the Institute when I joined it in June 1953. Our staff then consisted of two doctors, Dr. Hart and I, and a secretary. We set up an eye clinic for examination of patients and organized a research project in uveitis.

We later set up projects in glaucoma and strabismus in cooperation with the Eye Department of Howard University. A biochemist was later secured and began a study of the proteins making up the lens of the eye.

Dr. Hart resigned during the autumn and I became Acting Chief of the ophthalmology branch. No beds were available for inpatients, hence our first project on uveitis was largely carried out on ambulant patients and in collaboration with the Laboratory of Tropical Diseases of the Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases which did serological tests on our patients for toxoplasma gondii.