

An effective system of compensation to care for those who suffer economic handicap because of disability or death incurred in military service is essential to the maintenance of strong and efficient armed forces in a free society. Most of those who serve are not career military men. A veteran must receive compensation for disabilities incurred in service which prevent him from achieving his full potential in his civilian career. The program must be dynamic and sensitive to economic and social change and must be one in which the serviceman has full confidence.

To fulfill part of this commitment, the Veterans Administration operates a large hospital and medical care program. In 1969, 856,000 service-connected and needy non-service-connected veterans will receive hospital care under the auspices of the Veterans Administration. In the same year another 6.7 million veterans will use Veterans Administration Outpatient facilities or visit their own physicians on a fee basis paid for by the Veterans Administration. While caring for veterans, the Veterans Administration contributes to the nation's medical manpower resources by helping to train and provide clinical experience for almost one-half of the physicians graduating each year in America. President Johnson in his January 30, 1968 message noted the contributions of the Veterans Administration in the training of medical manpower and directed the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to accelerate this training.

One of the important residual benefits of this extensive medical complex is a research program encompassing research projects each year. Eighty five percent of these programs are related to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The other 15 percent are supportive investigations. Although the veteran is the first to receive the benefits of this research, everyone derives benefits from these advances in medical science. Veterans Administration investigators have been active in nearly all of the widely hailed medical breakthroughs and have taken the lead in many.

(2) The commitment to rehabilitate veterans and to help them towards adjustment to civilian life. The concept of readjustment benefits that emerged during the second World War was a milestone in veterans' legislation. The legislation developed from this concept proved to be one of the most statesmanlike measures ever enacted.

The largest program of adult education ever undertaken is the readjustment training made available to World War II, Korean, and Post-Korean veterans under the several GI Bills.