

"Within the next decade this nation will need one million more health workers."

Congress recognized the VA's potential for training health personnel with its unanimous passing of PL 89-785 in 1967. But the vast potential of the VA for training personnel in the entire spectrum of health occupations has been incompletely utilized.

The Commission strongly recommends that the VA utilize its network of hospitals and its skilled personnel to the greatest degree possible to train more personnel in the health occupations. This action will serve not only the desired national purpose, but will also better equip the Agency to perform its function of caring for veterans. The Commission further wishes to commend the President for recognizing this urgent issue and requesting the Administrator of Veterans Affairs to accelerate the training of medical specialists.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 56

The Commission recommends that proximity to medical teaching and research centers be only one and not the controlling consideration in locating and modernizing hospitals.

Background to Recommendation:

The Commission recognizes the value in terms of improved quality of medical care of locating veterans hospitals in reasonable proximity to medical teaching and research centers. Unfortunately, the number of such centers now and in the foreseeable future is so limited that the total application of this principle is unrealistic.

Limiting major modernization and new construction projects to such locations would seriously inconvenience large segments of the veteran population that are not located immediately adjacent to medical centers. Therefore, the Commission recommends that the Veterans Administration, in determining what hospitals should be constructed or what present hospitals should be modernized, should use proximity to present teaching and research centers as only one and not the controlling consideration.