

The report of the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer, and Stroke, issued in December 1964, focused attention on societal needs and led directly to introduction of the legislation authorizing Regional Medical Programs. Many of the Commission's recommendations were significantly altered by the Congress in the legislative process but The Act was clearly passed to meet needs and problems identified and given national recognition in the Commission's report and in the Congressional hearings preceding passage in The Act. Some of these needs and problems were expressed as follows:

- A program is needed to focus the Nation's health resources for research, teaching and patient care on heart disease, cancer, stroke and related diseases, because together they cause 70 percent of the deaths in the United States.
- A significant number of Americans with these diseases die or are disabled because the benefits of present knowledge in the medical sciences are not uniformly available throughout the country.
- There is not enough trained manpower to meet the health needs of the American people within the present system for the delivery of health services.
- Pressures threatening the Nation's health resources are building because demands for health services are rapidly increasing at a time when increasing costs are posing obstacles for many who require these preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative services.
- A creative partnership must be forged among the Nation's medical scientists, practicing physicians, and all of the Nation's other health resources so that new knowledge can be translated more rapidly into better patient care. This partnership should make it possible for every community's practicing physicians to share in the diagnostic, therapeutic and consultative resources of major medical institutions. They should similarly be provided the opportunity to participate in the academic environment of research, teaching and patient care which stimulates and supports medical practice of the highest quality.
- Institutions with high quality research programs in heart disease, cancer, stroke, and related diseases are too few, given the magnitude of the problems, and are not uniformly distributed throughout the country.
- There is a need to educate the public regarding health affairs. Education in many cases will permit people to extend their own lives by changing personal habits to prevent heart disease, cancer, stroke and related diseases. Such education will enable individuals to recognize the need for diagnostic, therapeutic or rehabilitative services, and to know where to find these services, and it will motivate them to seek such services when needed.