

You made the statement, I believe, that if we could make available to every man, woman and child the evidence that we have on cancer, 100,000 lives would be saved this year or any year. Is this correct?

Dr. FARBER. That is correct.

Mr. SKUBITZ. Of course, I recognize the task we have in trying to get to every individual, but don't we have a central clearing agency of some sort where information is collected?

Dr. FARBER. Yes, we do, through the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society, but the problem is complex. May I mention a few of the complexities?

First, we must have the patient come to his doctor early. This is No. 1. The American Cancer Society particularly has had a great educational program for many years in the attempt to have patients come much earlier than is now the case. If we could apply the cytologic diagnostic test, for example, to every woman today, we could save thousands of lives, literally thousands, because here is a form of cancer of the uterus which can be cured by surgery, or radiotherapy.

But if we can't get the patient examined properly and regularly, we cannot save lives.

There is a further point that should be made. It is that there is a lack of facilities in many of the community hospitals of the country where there are good men and well trained men and devoted doctors, but without expensive facilities and without all of the supportive therapy that is extremely costly, one cannot do as much for the patient as we hope to do when these regional medical programs bring support to every community hospital that is connected with every center, and every center connected with every other center.

There are many reasons of this kind, but if this country decided today that it was worthwhile saving these 100,000 lives by bringing the financial support and the administrative relationships that would be required, these lives could be saved.

Mr. SKUBITZ. Maybe I misunderstood you. I thought you were saying that one of our first problems is trying to bring about an awareness in the individual of what the danger signals are, and if they could recognize them, and then get to the proper place for proper medical attention, they would be saved. Am I right?

Dr. FARBER. That is point No. 1. Part of it is what the individual patient will do, and part of it is what the doctor will do. But if these patients come to hospitals which do not have facilities, the doctor, who is already tremendously overburdened with the tremendous amount of good that he is doing in general practice, will be unable to give the optimal treatment, because the facilities are lacking, because of the expense of supportive therapy, because of the number of experts in many fields of medicine, surgery, and laboratory science, are not available for the patient.

But if a patient should receive everything that is known today, he will stand a far, far better chance in such a place than he can otherwise.

Mr. SKUBITZ. Thank you, Doctor.

Mr. ROGERS. Thank you very much, Dr. Farber, for your excellent testimony.