

Allied health professions

Both associations fully supported passage of the Allied Health Professions Personnel Training Act of 1966. The program it authorized is barely underway, the value of it and the need for it are abundantly clear and we strongly favor continuation along the lines contemplated by H.R. 15757.

Health research facilities

The activities authorized under the Health Research Facilities Act are directly and essentially related to the continued expansion of our supply of health practitioners and continued improvement in the education of health students. The final goal, in all instances, is to make the finest possible care readily available to our fellow citizens. If properly funded, the health research facilities law will make an essential contribution and we urge its continuance.

In conclusion, we believe that the degree to which dental schools are a matter of national concern can hardly be overstressed. There are, at present, 50 dental schools located in 27 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. This means that 23 States have no dental school and must depend wholly upon outside resources for the education of practitioners.

The 23 States that have no dental school have a cumulative total population (1965 estimate) of nearly 31 million people. There are approximately 14,750 practitioners presently serving that population. As those practitioners retire from practice, their places must be taken by new men supplied from outside their States. And of course, if we are going to improve the dentist-patient ratio, the new supply must exceed the rate of retirement from practice.

At the present time, these 23 States have some 2,168 of their young citizens enrolled in dental schools throughout the Nation. Since State-supported schools must, understandably and of necessity, give priority to their own residents, students from States not having a dental school are accommodated, in 53 percent of the cases, by private schools. And it is these privately supported schools that seem to be suffering most heavily in the current financial crisis. As pressure increases, moreover, it is likely that States will limit further the acceptance of out-of-State students.

At present, dental schools that have no State affiliation enroll nearly 50 percent of the some 14,950 students currently studying for dental degrees.

Appended to our statement is a detailed recounting of the situation with regard to those States that have no dental school.

(The material referred to follows:)