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ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAMS

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TO: All Member Programs
FROM: Thomas E. Piemme, M.D.
President

July 3, 1973

I am writing to inform the membership regarding the activities of the Association since the annual meeting in April 1973, and to explore some issues that are important to the future of the Association.

Scientific Meeting of the Association and the Academy in November

You will recall that we discussed the potential of holding a semi-annual meeting of the Association in conjunction with the Academy of Physician's Assistants in order to present a scientific program at the time of the annual meeting of the Association of American Medical Colleges. The time and place of that meeting is now affirmed. The scientific program will be held the afternoon of Wednesday, November 7, in the Washington Hilton Hotel. The meeting is scheduled for three hours to be followed by the semiannual business meeting of the Association, and a reception. We have sent a call for abstracts to a large number of people as well as programs that have been identified for us from several mailing lists. In the event that abstracts have not been received by persons in your program who might wish to submit material for consideration, two copies of the call for papers are enclosed. I would urge that abstracts be returned to us as early as possible, certainly no later than July 15 since final selection of a program before July 31 will enable us to have that program printed in the program brochure of the Association of American Medical Colleges. Several abstracts have already been received, and I am encouraged that we will have a program of quality.

Development of a National Office for the Association and the Academy

The application to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for support for a national office of both the Association of Physician Assistant Programs and the Academy of Physician's Assistants is under formal consideration and will be brought before the meeting of the Foundation board in July. The Foundation staff has requested however that support for this effort be shared by more than one foundation. Consequently, Dr. Sadler and I have approached four other foundations and have been encouraged by the response. We hope to be able to secure funding for a national office so that we may obtain space and begin to recruit staff in order to commence operations in September 1973.

Individual Membership

You will recall that the By-laws of the Association were changed at the meeting in April in order to create individual membership in the Association. This was proposed in order that a broader representation of persons active in physician's assistant programs would be available for membership and committees and other activities of the organization. Moreover, a wider membership would provide the opportunity for better communication to the faculty and staff of member programs. Unfortunately, the text of the revised By-laws was not included in the minutes of the meeting, and several inquiries regarding the details of individual membership have come to my attention. I have attached the text of the revised By-laws as finally worded by Dr. Mullican, Chairman of the By-laws Committee. Applications for membership were submitted to member programs along with the minutes of the April meeting. To date few have been returned. The Executive Committee feels that this is exceedingly important and would urge each program director to encourage all members of his faculty and staff to join the Association as individual members. It is to be understood that the \$25.00 annual membership fee will include a subscription to The P.A. Journal now edited by Dr. Donald Detmer. Additionally, we plan this year to establish a bimonthly newsletter, the first issue of which will appear in August. Indeed, this present communication is the forerunner of that effort.

Developments in the Accreditation Process

The Joint Review Committee of the Council on Medical Education has now invited three individuals representing new health practitioners to join their membership. These three included a physician's assistant (Mr. William Stanhope), a Medex graduate (Mr. Steve Turnipseed), and a child health associate (Ms. Gayle Spears). No communication has been received from the Council on Medical Education with respect to the request of the Association that it be made a partner organization in the Joint Review Committee. I am currently communicating again with Dr. Ruhe regarding that request which was made by Dr. Sadler in March. Meanwhile the Joint Review Committee has broadened the base of those persons participating in site visits to include a number of physician's assistant graduates, and a number of members of the faculties of the several physician's assistant programs. The Council on Medical Education sponsored four meetings, each attended by twenty persons, at which the accreditation process was reviewed. For the most part little input was asked or required of the attendees; rather, the sessions were meant to instruct those who might be asked to attend site visits about the essentials, and the criteria by which programs were evaluated. The process is still tightly controlled by the Council on Medical Education and the four constituent societies that comprise the Residency Review Committee. Although somewhat improved, the situation remains unsatisfactory.

National Certification Examination

The guidelines and format of the National Certification Examination have been determined, and test committees are now constructing it in final form. The first examination will indeed be given in November of this year. Persons eligible to sit for the examination include graduates of programs approved by the Council on Medical Education accreditation process, graduates of programs currently funded by the Bureau of Health Manpower Education, and graduates of nurse Primex programs.

Standing Committees

For the information of the membership who may wish to communicate with those responsible for the activities of standing committees, let me review those committees and their chairmen. The committees include:

1. By-laws Committee - Charles Mullican, Chairman
2. Time and Place Committee - William Stanhope, Chairman
3. Evaluation Committee - Suzanne Greenberg, Chairman
4. Admissions Committee - William Stanhope, Chairman
5. Program Application Review Committee - Suzanne Greenberg, Chairman

The Evaluation Committee met the first week of June; others are expected to meet within the next two months. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be early in September, at which time the standing committees will report, and the activities of those committees communicated to the membership.

I am including four copies of this memorandum for distribution to other members of your faculty. Again I urge application for individual membership so that we may expand the mailing list and develop a reliable capacity to communicate activities and issues broadly.

Attachments