

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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October 28, 1985

Dear Walt,

As I promised during your visit here, I am sending you the memo that I sent Jim Chin. He is being quite cautious with this memo at this time so please don't circulate it extensively right now.

The background for this memo centers around the problem that, despite considerable resources having been spent on educational programs for AIDS in California, there is minimal State or local coordination of the programs. As a result there is no real AIDS control program in the state. This observation, plus the recent data suggesting that transmission of the AIDS virus continues at a high rate, stimulated the memo proposing that something be done.

Part of the solution has been making a plan. Another part has been solidifying support for the plan and getting a consensus of the leaders of the gay community. Both processes are taking place. The making of a document around which a consensus could be built has been critical. As an "adviser" I have been able to serve as a consensus focusing person who can talk to the community and the various semi-political committees with the blessing of the State Health Division but without having to speak officially for the State. It has been an ideal position in which to be. A position where I can speak of the science and of the needs without having to defend anyone's position or to insist on conservative budgeting in the face of increasing disease.

The current status is that a State AIDS Plan has been developed by Jim Chin and is moving up channels. A legislative task force plan is being developed and will be moved into the legislature for funding. If all goes as planned, both will be modified after the attached document and the outcome will be a State funded, county-based AIDS control plan of acceptable size. Although slower than I would like, it appears that this concert of events will successfully produce a plan acceptable to all.

In addition to the State AIDS Plan, I have been trying to deal with the inhibitors to AIDS vaccine production. As I'm sure you gathered from Genentech, AIDS vaccine work is progressing extremely well at the scientific level. A real problem exists at the management level, however. This problem centers around the fact that vaccines are bad business. The managers see an AIDS vaccine as having a small market (without any guarantee of government purchase) and as having a high risk possibility surrounding liability. Without the support of management, the bench top vaccine will be a long time in coming and will never reach beyond the laboratory.

I have approached this problem by: 1) trying to establish a guaranteed market by moving toward a purchase order for a vaccine (should it be developed and licensed) by the State; and, 2) by trying to stimulate state protection of liability for vaccine manufacturers. I think both of these will be feasible since there appears to be a great interest by state

elected officials.

At the CDC level, I have been urging vaccine companies to collaborate with CDC on both animal experiments and on future safety, immunogenicity and efficacy trials. The first part, chimpanzees, needs urgent attention from CDC. As we talked during your visit, both Chiron and Genentech are moving fast and could be ready for chimp challenge studies in the next several months. We need to solidify the CDC's interest in these collaborative programs and we need to make agreements with companies on how the release of the data will be handled. I have discussed this with Patricia Fultz. She is planning to have a general chimpanzee meeting to discuss these issues. I think formal agreements should be put out to all companies which have approached CDC as soon as possible. Vaccine challenge study was one of the major reasons CDC developed the chimpanzee model and now, with its development, we should move ahead as fast as possible. As usual, the extreme loads placed on the few doing all of these things is inhibiting the ability to move ahead rapidly. But if a consensus of protocol can be reached on this issue and support can be given to Patricia, I think CDC can make a real contribution in this area.

In summary, things are going well here. I continue to be optimistic that California will have an aggressive AIDS control program and the US may be able to develop and AIDS vaccine in the coming years.

Thanks for the visit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Don' or 'Francis', written in a cursive style.

Donald P. Francis, M.D., D.Sc.
AIDS Adviser

cc: James Curran, M.D.