



# NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

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INCORPORATED 1924

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## NEWSLETTER

My dear Fellow Physicians:

I released my first Newsletter to the national officers, members of the councils, committees, and officers of constituent and component societies in November 1966. At this time I am writing the second newsletter, but this time the coverage is meant to include the entire membership, as far as possible.

I want to give you a first-hand accounting of the activities of your President and to acquaint you with some fast-breaking developments in medical practice, specifically as it concerns medical services and increasing opportunities for doctors and other medical professions in the national Negro community. I will briefly summarize some of the activities described in the previous newsletter for the sake of continuity.

On October 4, 1965, your President, with two members of his Advisory Committee on Federal Legislation -- namely, President-Elect John L. S. Holloman, Jr. (N. Y.) and Past President Edward C. Mazique (D. C.) -- conferred with officers of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), namely, the Undersecretary, Mr. Wilbur Cohen; Assistant Secretary James Quigley; and U.S.P.H. Surgeon General William Stewart -- in the office of Mr. Cohen. As a result of this conference and subsequent correspondence, your President named the following NMA members who served on the Technical Advisory Committees meeting at the Social Security administrative offices in Baltimore in setting up guidelines for the establishment of the Medicare Law to become effective July 1, 1966: Dr. John A. Kenney (D.C.), "Hospital Utilization"; Dr. James E. Newby, Internist, Norfolk, Va., "Reimbursement"; Dr. William P. Quinn, Radiologist, Chicago, "Committee on Hospital Based Physicians"; Dr. Jeanne Spurlock, Psychiatrist, Chicago, "Committee on Psychiatric Services"; Dr. Earl Belle Smith, Surgeon, Pittsburgh, "Committee on Residence Service." Past President Kenneth Clement, Surgeon, Cleveland, was endorsed for the highest advisory council provided by the Medicare Law. He now serves on the 16-man Health Insurance Benefits Advisory Council (HUBAC). His professional stature and previous service with a HEW Advisory Council made him a most logical candidate. Your President served on the Medicare Technical Advisory Committee on Reimbursement and later received appointment to the 12-man National Advisory Council on regional medical programs against heart disease, cancer and stroke (Public Law 89-239).

At my request and with the cooperation of Undersecretary Wilbur Cohen and Mr. Samuel C. Smith, NMA Administrative Secretary, you have or will receive important information pamphlets on these two very important new laws on medical services and medical practice. It is to your personal interest and that of your patients to read and understand them as quickly as possible.

One of the first acts of this administration was to arrange for reactivation of the NMA-AMA liaison meetings. The first meeting of this group was held just six weeks after we took office at the AMA headquarters in Chicago on

September 27, 1965. The NMA committee consisted of L. H. Berry, President; John Holloman (N.Y.), President-Elect; W. T. Armstrong (N.C.), Chairman of the Board of Trustees; Emery L. Rann (N.C.), Speaker of the House of Delegates, John Kenney (D.C.), Past President; William Grant (Tenn.) and Jasper Williams (Ill.). The AMA committee consisted of Drs. James Appel, President; Charles Hudson, President-Elect; Percy Hopkins, Chairman of the Board of Trustees; and F. J. L. Blasingame, Executive Vice President. After an all-day session, the committees agreed on nine points in the area of cooperation toward elimination of discrimination in medical practice, to be submitted to our respective Trustee Boards with recommendation for adoption. The NMA Trustee Board approved all nine points at its interim Chicago meeting on February 12-13, 1966. The AMA Trustee Board approved six of the points without qualification. Three, however, were approved in principle and the AMA Board voted to invite the NMA Liaison Committee to meet with the entire AMA Trustee Board, as their luncheon guests, to discuss the total problem. This meeting was held on April 1, 1966, at AMA headquarters. The twenty AMA officers and trustees were present, including their president, chairman and vice chairman of the Trustee Board, speaker and vice speaker of the House of Delegates, three vice presidents, secretary-treasurer, and a past president. Included also were trustees from Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, Nevada, the east, mid-west, and far west. There were six NMA members in the liaison group, including President L. H. Berry (Ill.), President-Elect John Holloman (N.Y.), Past President John Kenney (D.C.), Dr. William H. Grant (Tenn.), Dr. Jasper Williams (Ill.), and an integrated member, Dr. Quentin Young (Ill.). Our Trustee Board Chairman and Speaker of the House could not be present. A detailed report of this meeting with photograph has been sent to your Journal. Southern AMA representatives led the way, followed by others, expressing their desire and determination to take aggressive steps jointly with NMA to eliminate racial discrimination in medical societies and hospitals.

I regard this as probably the most significant liaison meeting ever held by the two organizations. (See details in the Journal.) The prospects and opportunities for follow-through on joint operational plans for voluntary achievement toward equality of medical opportunity and medical services seem brighter than ever. This program is viewed as most appropriate and timely, because of the recently released "artillery barrage" of civil rights compliance guidelines for hospitals.

On February 25, 1966, your president, by request, met with Mr. Robert Nash and Mrs. Sherry Arnstien in the office of Mr. Peter Labassi, director of the new department of HEW, known as Office of Equal Health Opportunity. I serve as a consultant and as your representative in drawing up the first drafts of the guidelines referred to in Dr. Kenney's recent letter. There will be other meetings with HEW officials, and I will continue to bring in other qualified NMA representatives with geographic representation in mind as far as possible, as I have done all during the year.

It is important to continue applying for appointments in predominantly white hospitals in your respective localities. My long experience in the area of token integration in hospitals and medical schools leads me to strongly urge upon you the importance of having more than minimum qualifications before you apply. The March 15 so-called "deadline" is not of overwhelming importance. To be superiorly qualified first is much more important, especially in the south and bigger cities. After appointment, may I urge that you insist on opportunities for progressively increasing participation and that you aggressively take advantage of even nebulous opportunities. If you cannot find time and

motivation to do this, it may be better not to seek appointments. I cannot stress too strongly the importance of the responsibility that comes with such appointments.

Please report to your President and to Dr. Jasper F. Williams, Chairman of the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals, NMA, 408 East Marquette Road, Chicago, Illinois 60637, the constituted responsible group for this function, any examples of racial discrimination in hospital opportunity and patient services promptly. Your name will be kept entirely confidential, if desired. Report promptly any dramatic or noteworthy achievement in medical integration in your local communities, especially in the south. The new joint AMA-NMA program calls for collection of both types of data, to be used appropriately. This information will, of course, also be forwarded to the Office of Equal Health Opportunity. The latter office will receive even unsigned complaints.

Travels and speeches of the President include a 20,000-mile trip to East and West Africa under the sponsorship of the State Department and the Pan-American Airways from mid-November to mid-December, 1965. Eleven hospitals and five medical schools were visited. Lectures and demonstrations in gastro-enterology and gastroscopy were given in medical schools. Conferences were held with Ministers of Health and African doctors regarding possible cooperative programs between NMA and African countries.

Other visits and speeches include a visit to the Houston Medical Forum as guest speaker on January 19, 1966, on the subject, "Impact of New Federal Medical Programs in Negro Communities."

Participant in symposium - titled, "The Ulcer Diathesis" before the Annual Clinical Congress, American Association of Abdominal Surgeons, Chicago; symposium participant at the Annual Meeting of the John A. Andrew Clinical Society, Tuskegee, April 16-20, 1966 - subject, "Regional Medical Programs Against Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke", with RMP Director Robert Q. Marston of the National Institutes of Health; symposium participant on the subject, "Problems of Neoplasms of the Stomach"; conferences with the National Advisory Council on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke programs at Bethesda, Maryland.

With very best regards and a sincere wish to serve you and our organization to the very best of my ability during this administration, I am

Respectfully and fraternally yours,

Leonidas H. Berry, M.D.

May 4, 1966.