

## AMA Convention

# Cigaret Smoking Called Hazardous to Health; Discrimination in Medical Societies Opposed

Adoption of a statement calling cigaret smoking a hazard to health, approval of an AMA-sponsored national accreditation system for continuing education programs for physicians, and adoption of a resolution opposing racial discrimination in state and county medical societies were among major actions of the American Medical Association House of Delegates during the AMA's 113th Annual Convention held June 21 through 25 in San Francisco.

Donovan Ward, MD, Dubuque, Iowa, was chosen AMA President-Elect by the house. Ward will take office in June, 1965 as successor to Norman A. Welch, MD, Boston, who was inaugurated on June 23.

The House adopted a statement which said that the AMA "is on record and does recognize a significant relationship between cigaret smoking and the incidence of lung cancer and certain other diseases, and that cigaret smoking is a serious health hazard."

It recommended that the AMA develop programs to disseminate health education material on the hazards of smoking to members of all age groups through all available means of communication.

In its statement on civil rights, the House said that the AMA "is unalterably opposed to the denial of membership, privileges, and responsibilities in county medical societies and state medical associations to any duly licensed physician because of race, color, religion, ethnic affiliation, or national origin," and called upon "all state medical associations, all component societies, and all individual members of the AMA to exert every effort to end every instance in which such equal rights, privileges or responsibilities are denied."

The survey and accreditation program in continuing medical education will be conducted by the AMA Council on Medical Education. It will be a voluntary program, with attention

concentrated on institutions and organizations offering courses rather than on individual courses. Approved institutions will be so designated in the Council's annual publication of *Continuing Education Courses for Physicians*.

The House reaffirmed the AMA's 1951 guides on the relation of physicians and hospitals in accepting an extensive report on *Physician-Hospital Relations*.

The report includes a review of the development of AMA's policy on physician-hospital relations, a study of the relation of policy to actual practice, factors influencing change.

The House approved the creation of a Section on Allergy, increasing the total number of sections to 23. The House also referred to the Board of Trustees a report from the reference committee on sections and section work which recommended against creation of a Section on Space Medicine.

A suggestion by outgoing President Edward R. Annis, MD, for a series of dues increases which would ultimately bring the annual dues to \$100 a year—present level is \$45—was referred to the AMA Board of Trustees for study. Annis suggested the increases as a way of financing an expanded program of communications among members of the medical profession and between the profession and the public.

In other actions, the House:

### House Action Summary

A more detailed report on the actions of the House of Delegates appears in the July 6 edition of *The AMA News*.

In its July 13 edition, *Medical News* will publish a summary of the report of the AMA Commission on the Cost of Medical Care, which was accepted by the House at the Annual Convention.

- Reiterated the AMA policy favoring federal grants for "bricks and mortar"—funds for construction and renovation of medical schools, hospitals, related institutions, and mental health centers—but urged that the "advantages and desirability" of multiple source financing be kept clearly in mind. The House also was informed by the board that it is appointing a commission to conduct a broad study of the role of federal support of medical research.

- Adopted a resolution stating that the resurgence of syphilis and gonorrhea has become "a national problem" and calling on the Association to take leadership in methods to control and eliminate the diseases.

- Endorsed a program which would make available to interns and residents information about professional liability insurance.

- Approved a study of the appropriate content of "medical civics and economics" courses for medical students.

- Approved a Judicial Council recommendation for a continuing medical ethics program to educate physicians and the public on the meaning of medical ethics and the effect it has upon them.

- Adopted a report by the Committee on Communications urging redoubled communications efforts by county and state medical societies, and ordered the Board of Trustees to investigate establishment of a wire communications system between AMA headquarters in Chicago and offices of state medical associations.

- Agreed that the AMA should sponsor a national conference on area-wide planning of hospitals and related health facilities.

- Referred to the council on Medical Service a resolution condemning the practice by some hospitals of adopting constitutions which deny staff privileges to physicians not eligible or certified by specialty bodies or societies.