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Revolutionary Center for Medical Research Dedicated



Associated Press Wirephoto

View during opening ceremonies at the fourteen-story Clinical Center Building, which was dedicated yesterday in suburban Bethesda, Md. Other buildings are in the foreground.

Special to the *New York Times*

WASHINGTON, July 2, — The Federal Government's \$64,000,000 Clinical Center, described as a revolutionary stride in medical research, was dedicated today. The fourteen-story building includes a 500-bed hospital section and 1,100 scientific laboratories.

The center, which will be devoted to conquering such killers as cancer and heart disease, is in near-by Bethesda, Md., and will receive on Monday its first non-paying patients — eight women suffering from cancer. Dr. W. Henry Sebrell Jr., head of the National Institute of Health, said the women "will be the best-studied patients in the world."

"This center is not a hospital," he added. "You don't get in by just being sick. You don't get in for medical care. You get in only for research."

"For the first time in history," Dr. Sebrell continued, "we will be able to integrate laboratory and clinical research so that there can be a complete study of the chronic diseases that kill men."

Mrs. Hobby Leads Dedication

The dedication speech was delivered by Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. The Federal Public Health Service, which will operate the clinic,

is a division of her department.

"I proudly dedicate this center to medical research as a symbol of our national concern for the health of our people, for their right to pursue happiness, unhampered by crippling pain and illness," Mrs. Hobby said, adding: "In freedom, this building and the people who work here are dedicated to the endless struggle against human suffering."

"We are dedicating it today. Dedicating it to the open mind of research. Dedicating it as an example of democracy heeding its obligation to the free men who are together self-governing."

The Secretary said that she felt "tremendous excitement in the face of infinite potentiality," realizing that "each new solution to be found here will mean a new chance at the full and finished life for numberless men, women, and children."

"This center," she declared, "will house the widest array of specialists and technicians that has ever, in the history of mankind, been assembled to work in pure and applied science."

The center, for which Congress provided funds for the construction costs and will vote the money required for operation, was five years in building. Its development into full operation will take two to

three years as physicians, scientists, laboratory experts and therapists pioneer in new administrative and medical techniques.

Fruition of a Long Dream

The clinic is the fruition of a dream of Public Health Service scientists to bring laboratories and patients together. This dream was expressed in print as long ago as the agency's 1911 annual report. The center will now be the focal point of the seven National Institutes of Health.

These institutes deal with the fields of arthritis and metabolic diseases, cancer, dental research, heart, mental health, microbiological and neurological diseases and blindness.

Officials recalled that in the past, Public Health Service scientists had moved to the scene of the outbreak of diseases as they made progress in conquering cholera, diphtheria, influenza, leprosy, malaria, measles, pellagra, smallpox, tetanus, tuberculosis, typhoid, typhus, venereal disease and yellow fever.

However, today's cripples and killers—heart diseases, cancers, mental illnesses and chronic diseases—the officials said, are not concentrated in epidemics and "must be brought to the scientists for best study."

"This center represents a massive

approach to the major killing and crippling diseases," Dr. Sebrell said. "We are not interested in rare, exotic, hard-to-diagnose diseases, but in those that damage and kill the most Americans."

He described how the building had been designed for all the facets of this "massive approach." Ground and top floors of the main building will be used for general services. Included are admission centers, auditoriums and operating rooms.

The in-between floors are divided into three sectors. The Southern exposure, overlooking the Maryland countryside, will belong to the patients, with twenty-six to a floor. In the center are the nurses' stations, dietary kitchens and treatment rooms. The Northern suites will be used by the scientists for their tests and studies of patients. Each floor has about a hundred laboratories with de-mountable-partitions.

One Wing for Radioactive Study

There also are special purpose wings. One is for animal experimentation. Two are for basic science studies and in another, autopsies will be conducted. In an eight-story wing, three stories of which are underground will be all radiation facilities.

This wing will not be opened until next January. When finished

it will contain all modern atomic energy means of treating patients as well as laboratories to prepare medications containing radioisotopes. An unusual feature of the radiation wing is the provision of rooms for patients, making possible supervised control of radioisotopes for diagnosis and treatment.

Dr. Sebrell emphasized that psychological and spiritual factors in the treatment of patients suffering from often-incurable long-term diseases had received their place in the Clinical Center. This phase even included the calling in of color experts to supervise the entire decoration.

On the top floor, where the operating rooms are finished in soft green tile, is a huge gymnasium-like room that will be used for the type of physical rehabilitation pioneered by Dr. Howard A. Rusk, director of the Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, New York University-Bellevue Medical Center, and associate editor of *THE NEW YORK TIMES*.

There also is a dignified chapel, with a revolving stage presenting in turn the altars of the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths. It will always be open for meditation.

Each Floor Has Sunroom

Medical and psychiatric social work and recreational therapy will be carried out through the wards. A central sunroom on each floor will serve as a gathering place for ambulatory patients.

More than ninety doctors are now on the staff of the seven research institutes, and there are as many doctors of science.

The first eight patients arriving Monday are cervical cancer cases, which will be treated with large doses of hormones. The second eight, to follow soon, are hypertension heart cases to be treated with new drugs believed to be better for lowering blood pressure than anything now in use. The third eight, sufferers from rheumatoid arthritis, will arrive within a month for further work with ACTH and cortisone.

The patients will continue to arrive at a rate of twenty-five to forty a month until there are about 250 by June, 1954. All will be volunteers.

"Only persons recommended by physicians, hospitals or medical schools will be admitted," Dr. John A. Trautman, director of the clinical center, said. "Most of these will come from the Eastern Seaboard [to make follow-up studies easier] and nearly all will come to fulfill a special requirement."

Dr. Sebrell added that "every step of their treatment will be explained to them as we go along," and "they may leave any time they wish."

While the patients will not be charged—their care is regarded as a research cost—they may make voluntary contributions to the Federal Treasury if they desire.

The patients will find dozens of devices and special features in the institution, where some will live for extended periods.