



*executive committee of  
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

*working party of  
the regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
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SUPPLY OF TEXTBOOKS FOR MEDICAL STUDENTS

The Director proposes for consideration of the Executive Committee a program for the improvement of the quality of teaching of medicine through the provision of textbooks, principally in Spanish and Portuguese. These textbooks would cover the basic sciences in the medical school curriculum for students of Latin America. Difficulty of access to textbooks and often inadequate quality of those available are most important problems today in the teaching of medicine. As part of the policy of the Organization particular attention has been given to a solution of these problems. A plan has now been devised which derives from a study undertaken by two experts who visited 36 schools of Latin America and interviewed more than a hundred deans and professors of medicine. To these surveys has been added information originating from other institutions and persons with experience in the problem.

In essence the plan provides for the Pan American Health Organization to sponsor the publication of 22 textbooks covering the basic sciences in the medical school curriculum in Latin America. This would be done through a revolving fund for medical textbooks, which would allow for the initial selection, translation and publication of these books for subsequent sale or rental at cost to the students of Latin America.

Although it may need to be up-dated in some cases, the situation in Latin America with respect to the number of schools of medicine, students admitted, students graduated, and total students is as follows:

(\*)

Number of Schools of Medicine	Total Students	Admission to first year	Graduates	Percentage
110	83,568	14,896	6,196	41.5%

\*This information applies to the academic year 1963 except in a few cases where it is based in 1960 figures.

First year admissions can be broken down as follows:

97 schools admit an average of: 70 students - total: 6,790 students  
13 schools admit more than : 200 students - total: 8,196 students

Of these 13 schools, 6 admit between 200 and 400 students; the remaining 7 schools each admit more than 400 students, one of them admitting as many as 2,000 students.

The Organization proposes a publication program which takes into account the needs and objectives of the medical educational program in Latin America. Further, it proposes that textbooks be provided for 22 subjects in the medical curriculum and that these be published in groupings beginning with requirements for the first year in medical schools.

### Plan of Operations

Medical schools in the program will be supplied with a total of the "starting edition" of about 10,000 copies on the basis of an agreement to be negotiated between the Organization and the Government concerned. These agreements will ensure the continuity of the program through a system which provides for recovering the cost of the books supplied.

Each medical school participating in the program will be invited to nominate candidates to an expert committee which will be responsible for selecting or preparing the textbook that is to be published. Since the instructors will have taken part in selecting the committee concerned, it is expected that the books selected will be readily acceptable.

The expert committees will meet according to subjects groups, consideration being given first to basic sciences and introduction to scientific method; then the application of these to the healthy man, and finally, to man in search of cure of disease. Textbooks will be reviewed periodically by the expert committees in order to keep them up-to-date.

### Cost Estimates

A detailed review has been made of cost elements. Printing costs have included estimates for royalties, translation into Spanish and Portuguese, revisions and corrections, printing, binding and distribution. Estimates also have been made for the cost of expert committees for selection of books and for administration of the program including consultants. The foregoing cost estimates, based on 20,000 copies of each book result in a per book cost of \$4.96.

The cost by calendar year over a five year period is shown below. Since each book is expected to last three years, it will be noted that the figures in the years 1970 and 1971 include reprinting of the books produced in 1967 and 1968 respectively.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Subjects</u>	<u>Copies</u>	<u>Cost</u>
1967	5	100,000	\$496,000
1968	5	100,000	496,000
1969	4	80,000	396,800
1970	9	180,000	892,800
1971	9	180,000	892,800
	<u>22*</u>	<u>640,000</u>	<u>\$3,174,400</u>

#### Financial Implications for PAHO

The foregoing cost figures represent the gross requirements for the first five years. It is expected that during the same period repayments derived from sale or rental of books will amount to \$1.7 million, leaving a net capital investment of \$1.5 million at the end of five years. From that point the system would be fully self-financing, and in addition may reasonably be expected to repay a substantial portion of the capital investment.

Preliminary discussions have been held with the Inter-American Development Bank with a view to obtaining a line of credit up to \$3.2 millions to assure financing of the gross cost, and to provide a Revolving Fund for future operation of the system. It is expected that long-term financing over a period of twenty years can be obtained at a low rate of interest, with an initial grace period of five or six years before starting repayment.

Under the financing arrangement outlined above, the Organization would undertake a commitment to start amortization payments in 1971 or 1972. At maximum this would require \$100,000 per year over a twenty year period. Should the system be able, as planned, to repay a substantial portion of the investment, the financial cost to PAHO would be reduced a corresponding amount.

It is believed that the enormous benefits which will accrue to medical education in the Americas justifies the proposed investment by the Pan American Health Organization.

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\* Excludes repeat of five subjects in 1970 and 1971.