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14-17 June 1976

EIGHTH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON THE PAHO REGIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE  
AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES

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**PAN AMERICAN HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION**

**EIGHTH MEETING  
11-13 DECEMBER 1975  
SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL**

**SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE  
PAHO REGIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE  
AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES**

## **REPORT TO THE DIRECTOR**

Ref: RD 14/10  
December 1975

**PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION**  
Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of the  
**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

Washington, D.C.

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SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE  
PAHO REGIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Report to the Director

1975

INTRODUCTION

The Eighth Meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee on the PAHO Regional Library of Medicine and the Health Sciences (RLM) took place in the Library building at São Paulo, Brazil, on 11-13 December 1975. Mr. Roy L. Kidman acted as chairman and Drs. Tulio Arends and Ricardo R. Rodríguez as rapporteurs.

Dr. Héctor R. Acuña, Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), expressed his pleasure in meeting with the Committee for the first time and his gratitude for the advice and support it had given to RLM's development and expansion.

Dr. Acuña recalled that the Ministers of Health of the Americas, at their Third Special Meeting in Santiago, Chile, in October 1972, had placed great importance on the creation of national networks of documentation for the health sciences in Latin America, to be linked among themselves and with RLM and the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM) in Bethesda.

The Director referred to the need for intra- and intersectorial collaboration. He said that a program for the extension of primary health services does not depend so much on its quality as on the coordination of its activities within an integrated national plan. Developing countries cannot expect a solution of their problems patterned on the social and economic growth schemes of developed countries. Latin American countries should therefore find, through their own means and terms, a way to provide for their specific needs.

## 1. Current status report

The RLM Director and staff described the activities summarized in document PAHO/RLM 8/2, and the international collaboration received to cover the bibliographic needs of Latin America.

RLM's experience in Brazil provides a good model for the development of national centers in other Latin American countries. The first step in that direction is to prepare a Union Catalog of Periodicals.

Agreements have been signed between PAHO and the governments of Chile, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela, and there is hope in the near future that similar agreements will be signed with the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Paraguay.

The staff continued to develop the services rendered by RLM: photocopy of scientific articles; bibliographic research and distribution of information; educational program; cataloging and classification of books; and exchange with other centers, subcenters, and subsystems in Brazil, and national centers in Latin America. RLM also continued to sell WHO/PAHO publications in Brazil. A satisfactory progress has been accomplished in all these areas.

RLM Director called attention to the economic difficulties suffered by the Library this year as a result of a 10-percent reduction in its budget and of the special instructions he received to reduce expenses and not to fill vacant posts. Seven staff members resigned and two others left because of illness.

## 2. Financial report and proposed budget for RLM

Among the grants received up to date, those from Brazil and foreign institutions were almost equal. The W. K. Kellogg Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund terminated their support in 1975, but the Divisão Nacional de Câncer gave the Library a grant for 1976. In addition, a grant from the Government of Brazil's Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos (FINEP) for 1976 was being processed.



The schedule of sources of funds, and the application of resources by expense elements and activities for 1974 and their estimated equivalents for 1975 and 1976, as shown in Tables 1, 2, and 3, were reviewed by the Committee.

The Committee requested that a budget statement by function, income, and expenditures be prepared and reviewed by 30 June 1976 to insure a balance of income and expenditures within established program priorities.

### 3. Status of the FINEP grant

A CR\$17,207,000.00 grant (approximately US\$1.7 million) was requested from FINEP by RLM in further support of the project to strengthen the Brazilian biomedical library network.

The project will begin early in 1976 and will last 3 years. Approximately 30 percent of this grant will be allotted to RLM and 70 percent to the 11 subcenters and 6 subsystems. The criteria used for the distribution of funds are based on data collected during the past 7 years by RLM and on information supplied by the subcenters and subsystems.

It is hoped that at the end of 3 years the project will be self financed, and will have the support of the participating universities. To this effect, agreements will be signed with university rectors and librarians.

It was noted that RLM should not only cover the needs of Brazil but also those of all other Latin American countries.

PAHO Director suggested that, in view of the fact that grants create an administrative burden for the Organization, causing expenditures that cannot always be covered, a specific amount of money for administrative overhead should be added in each agreement.

The Committee commended RLM for obtaining support for the project and suggested that careful planning be provided for appropriate management of the funds with an external advisory committee assisting the Library Director in the review and allocation of the funds.

#### 4. Development of the MEDLINE system in Brazil

The first RLM teleprocessing operation occurred on 22 August 1975 from the IBM 370/155 computer of the University of São Paulo's Atomic Energy Institute. Using a Texas Instrument 733 KSR terminal at RLM, searches were conducted for 1 hour. In September 1975, RLM gave its first MEDLINE course to five librarians from the Federal Universities of Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, and Pernambuco. One hour per week experimental MEDLINE service outside São Paulo started at Recife (29 September), Rio de Janeiro (3 October), and Brasília (6 October). Using MEDLINE at RLM, 254 bibliographies were completed in São Paulo and a combined total of 70 in Brasília, Recife, and Rio de Janeiro. Terminals at Belo Horizonte, Salvador, Fortaleza, and Porto Alegre are planned for early February. Unfortunately, receipt of the 1975 data base from NLM was delayed because of customs difficulties.

The Committee was informed that the MEDLINE system project, which is supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Brazilian Government, will finish in June 1976. The Committee unanimously recommended that PAHO provide means to RLM to continue this project and study the possibility of extending its use to other Latin American countries. RLM should make sure that this transition period does not adversely affect the MEDLINE services it now renders and should continue to explore the future possibilities of sharing computer time with other institutions or agencies as a means to lower operational costs.

#### 5. Development of RLM's audiovisual center

The Committee was pleased to learn of the steady expansion of RLM's audiovisual center, which now has a collection of 500 items, including videocassettes, microfiches, films, and slides. The evaluation of audiovisuals is made by a Committee composed of members of the Escola Paulista de Medicina and RLM's staff.

The Committee stressed the importance of publishing a catalog of audiovisual materials and facilities so that they might be used by other

Latin American countries. A recommendation was made, which reiterated an earlier one, by the Committee, that RLM's audiovisual center work in cooperation with the Latin American Center for Educational Technology on Health (CLATES) to avoid duplication and overlapping.

6. Agreement with RLM, the Brazilian National Cancer Service and the U.S. National Cancer Institute

The Committee was informed that these 2-year agreements would be signed in the very near future. Under their terms, journals on cancer and related subjects will be acquired and distributed to libraries, researchers, physicians, and institutions specializing in cancer and librarians of cancer centers will be trained at RLM.

7. Educational program

The RLM educational program was described in its totality. The first 3 years were developmental and 1972-1975 showed substantial growth in activity with the support of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation (Table IV). The last period, which started in September 1975, is for training librarians, 70 percent of whom are from Brazil and 30 percent from other Latin American countries.

It was noted that continued support for these programs should be obtained from national and international sources. One specific recommendation was that a number of PAHO fellowships be administered by PAHO Headquarters for award to Latin American library personnel.

8. Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)

A report was given on the results of a self-financing SDI program provided primarily for physicians living in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. The objectives of the program were to compare the needs of rural and urban

physicians and to study the feasibility of extending to them a fiscally acceptable program of dissemination of scientific information. In addition an evaluation was made of user satisfaction.

The results show that there is a need for SDI services, particularly for rural physicians. The next phase of the program will concentrate on these users and will limit the number of subject areas to be covered.

Eventually, it is hoped that the RLM subcenters will be able to make on-line searches.

It was agreed that PAHO should continue to publish the Carta Medica, the Spanish version of the Medical Letter on Drugs and Therapeutics, and to use RLM's SDI programs as the best means for its distribution.

#### 9. National biomedical documentation systems in other Latin American countries

A general review was presented of the status of the national biomedical documentation systems in other Latin American countries. Interviews were held with officers of the Fondo Colombiano de Investigaciones Científicas (COLCIENCIAS) and the Colombian Minister of Health. An agreement with COLCIENCIAS is awaiting reconfirmation by the new Minister and signature by the Director of PAHO.

An analysis from three surveys held in 1971, 1972, and 1975 in Venezuela was presented which reflected the evolution of biomedical bibliographic resources in that country and the urgent need for further development. An agreement was made among several Venezuelan institutions (Ministry of Health and Social Assistance, Central University, National Council of Scientific Investigations (CONICIT) and Venezuelan Association of Schools of Medicine) and PAHO. A National Advisory Council was constituted and a Venezuelan biomedical network is being organized with the financial support of CONICIT.

In Argentina, no agreement has been signed to date.

Paraguay has finished its 243-titled Union Catalog of Periodical Publications. Bolivia is making extensive use of RLM's facilities.

The Committee expressed the hope that these PAHO/country agreements would stimulate both a strengthening of national activities and international collaboration as was being observed in Venezuela.

#### 10. Priorities for the near future

The Committee heard a review of several problem areas touching the management of RLM, subcenters, a coordinated approach to material acquisition, MEDLINE, educational program, SDI programs and library services to other Latin American countries.

The Committee made the following recommendations consistent with the available human and fiscal resources.

(a) Strengthening of RLM's management and operational capabilities: administration, services, personnel, equipment, and bibliographic services.

(b) Provision of MEDLINE services to other Latin American countries and to those institutions and regions in Brazil which guarantee a continuous and profitable use.

(c) Extension of RLM's services to all countries of Latin America, establishing PAHO/country agreements where appropriate.

(d) Establishment of a system of planned acquisition of periodical publications, revising the subscriptions of RLM and those of the subcenters.

(e) Extension of the educational program to library personnel and users, and promotion of the SDI program.

Finally, the Committee observed with regret that the following recommendations made last year had not been implemented and pointed out the urgency of putting them in practice.

The Committee, specifically:

i. Urged the Director of PAHO to request RLM Director to accept a further extension of his appointment to allow time to search for a successor. The latter should be a highly qualified Latin American medical scientist, internationally respected, and with proved leadership qualities.

ii. Urged the immediate appointment of a highly qualified Deputy Director, preferably a Brazilian.

iii. Urged the appointment of a Business Manager with proved administrative and managerial skills.

The Committee wished to recognize the dynamic leadership of RLM Director over the past 7 years, which established RLM as a potent Inter-American force in the provision of information services for the advancement of health sciences and health care.

TABLE 1

PAHO REGIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES  
Schedule of Sources of Funds

	1974 US \$	1975 US \$	1976 US \$
	Actual	Est.	Est.
PAHO/WHO Regular Budget	218,335	245,955	257,006
Pan American Health and Education Foundation <sup>1/</sup>	98,693	42,648	-
Commonwealth Fund	93,690	15,448	-
United Nations Development Program <sup>2/</sup>	63,380	153,310	98,940
Government of Brazil <sup>3/</sup>	230,167	287,982	360,000
Divisão Nacional de Câncer	-	-	80,000
Ministério do Planejamento (SUBIN)	-	8,250	-
U.S. Agency for International Development	19,100	-	-
Latin American Cancer Research Information Project (LACRIP)	-	-	25,400
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<u>723,365</u>	<u>753,593</u>	<u>821,346</u>
Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos (FINEP)	-	-	606,634 <sup>4/</sup>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>723,365</u>	<u>753,593</u>	<u>1,427,980</u>

1/ Grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

2/ To develop the MEDLINE system in Brazil and establish an audiovisual unit

3/ Includes: Ministério da Educação e Cultura; Ministério da Saúde; Secretaria da Saúde do Estado de São Paulo

4/ Being processed

TABLE 2

## PAHO REGIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES

## Application of Resources by Expense Element

	<u>1974</u> US \$	<u>1975</u> US \$	<u>1976</u> US \$	<u>Total</u> US \$
Salaries and Wages:				
Internationals	158,240 (26,500)	194,829 ( 36,000)	197,380 (18,000)	550,449 ( 80,500)
Local	147,650	154,822 ( 10,840)	210,661 ( 7,160)	513,133 ( 18,000)
Travel	17,039	19,174	16,421	52,634
Consultants	11,706 ( 1,250)	37,254 ( 27,750)	19,446 ( 5,250)	68,406 ( 34,250)
Fellowships	18,494	3,604	5,250 ( 5,250)	27,348 ( 5,250)
Seminar Costs	27,940	16,164	-	44,104
Contractual Services	38,756	41,341 ( 6,380)	18,820 (18,820)	98,917 ( 25,200)
Supplies and Equipment	168,667 (30,300)	161,294 ( 69,670)	181,058 (36,970)	511,019 (136,940)
Hospitality	193	194 ( 100)	216 ( 100)	603 ( 200)
Publications	129,350	106,503 ( 1,000)	158,806	394,659 ( 1,000)
Miscellaneous	5,330 ( 5,330)	18,414 ( 1,570)	13,288 ( 7,390)	37,032 ( 14,290)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>723,365 (63,380)</u>	<u>753,593 (153,310)</u>	<u>821,346 (98,940)</u>	<u>2,298,304 (315,630)</u>

NOTE: Amounts in parentheses represent UNDP contributions for listed items.



TABLE 3

## PAHO REGIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE AND THE HEALTH SCIENCES

## Application of Resources by Activity

	<u>1974</u> US \$	<u>1975</u> US \$	<u>1976</u> US \$
Office of the Director	133,317	121,257	145,926
Bibliographic Division	159,056	144,668	174,100
Reference Division	157,737	143,468	172,655
Technical Division	164,336	149,470	179,879
Educational Division	45,539	41,420	49,846
MEDLINE System	39,485	89,115	71,485
Audiovisual Unit	<u>23,895</u>	<u>64,195</u>	<u>27,455</u>
TOTAL	<u>723,365</u>	<u>753,593</u>	<u>821,346</u>

TABLE 4

SUMMARY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (1972-1975)\*

PERSONNEL TRAINED	PROJECTED	ACHIEVED
Medical library technicians	72	102
Graduate medical librarians	30	91
Librarians from other health fields	24	26
Medical library managers	36	403
MEDLINE searchers	-	5

\*Financed by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.