

7/2/82 Dir, NCI
July 15, 1982

Entire

Special Assistant for Scientific Coordination, DCT, NCI

My July 2 Memo Updating Information on the Acquired Immunodeficiency Epidemic

Director, NCI

Through: Acting Director, DCT, NCI Ray

I understand that you had some concern with my comments regarding an NIH response to this epidemic. It may be helpful if I expand upon those comments.

I believe that the NCI has been very responsive from our earliest recognition of this new syndrome, and has made the appropriate resources available in a timely way. Indeed, the first workshop organized by any group in the country to deal with this epidemic was the one sponsored by the NCI in September, 1981. However, I do believe that it is now appropriate for other components of the NIH to join us. In fact, this syndrome is mainly a problem of immunoregulation and infection, and even those 50% of the patients with cancer are not, in general, dying of the cancer, but rather of primary infection. I believed that an NIH/CDC Task Force should be appointed, and I had hoped, by dint of my memo, that you and others would bring this suggestion to Dr. Wyngaarden's attention. I am pleased that a Task Force has now been appointed, and that I have been chosen to represent the NCI on that Task Force. I continue to feel that many resources and much effort will be required to solve this problem, that it is a research and public health challenge which should involve many components of the NIH, that the NCI has exercised unquestionable leadership and initiative, but that now others must join the NCI and the CDC.

I shall continue to keep you informed on all matters regarding this most extraordinary development in human biology.

Arthur S. Levine, M.D.