

to the staff for a short time and specific cases have not been investigated.

So far, the hospital has used the data in generating patient mix analysis reports and in the planning and budgeting process. Some of the findings have been presented to doctors, but the incorporation of the new analytic tool into the ongoing medical audit and the utilization review activities in the hospital are still in the planning stages.

#### Costs and Medical Tradition

One staffer whose background, like that of many others who are making these studies, is in management and economic analysis says that the movement to make doctors aware of costs flies in the face of a long-standing medical tradition. "The tradition is to separate these things [cost and medical care]. You don't want to burden the patient and the doctor with making economic decisions where life and health are at stake. If you asked them, most doctors wouldn't know what, for example, the tests they prescribe cost."

Critics of the nation's hospital system have contended that it contains an untold amount of waste and inefficiency, and that probably tough federal regulation will be the ultimate solution to this problem. The studies at Yale-New Haven Hospital and at NYH, for all their interesting results, have yet to uncover evidence of this waste, such as surgery that wasn't needed or beds that were wasted by unduly prolonged patient stays. Indeed, the emphasis on self-comparison in these studies bothers one medical reformer who is with a prominent firm specializing in health care analysis. "The problem is that these studies are comparative. You're drawing a comparison with what is already being done, which doesn't say anything about whether you're doing it the way you should in the first place." But, although they are not as yet addressing these questions, the staffs at these two hospitals are taking steps toward the related problem—which is whether U.S. hospitals can regulate themselves, their practices, and their costs, instead of having someone else do it for them.—DEBORAH SHAPLEY

**Erratum:** In Fig. 1 of "Mineral resources, economic growth, and world population" by D. B. Brooks and P. W. Andrews (page 14, 5 July 1974), the price for tungsten refers to short ton units of concentrate and that for manganese to long ton units of concentrate.

**Erratum:** In "Products and Materials" (page 280, 24 January 1975), the description of the PM 6 line of spectrophotometers from Carl Zeiss refers to deuterium and hydrogen light sources. The sentence should have read, "All models feature two light sources, deuterium and halogen."

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