



# Intercom

## Duke University Medical Center

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### Employees' Help Sought for Improvements

By John Becton

The only right answer to any question on next month's Employee Survey will be one's honest opinion.

The survey (see *Intercom*, 1/14/77) will begin March 5 and is being done

by an outside firm, the National Survey Research Center (NSRC) of Cleveland, Ohio, according to a letter sent out this week to all medical center bi-weekly employees from Richard H. Peck, administrative

director of Duke Hospital.

The letter further stated that participation would be voluntary, completely anonymous and scheduled during convenient times. It will take about one hour of normal working hours for which employees will be paid.

Both Peck and NSRC President Frank Semple said the goal of the survey is to "make Duke Medical Center a better place to work."

#### Much Success Over 26 Years

Employees will have the opportunity to express opinions about policies, practices, benefits and working conditions at the medical center, Semple said, adding that such a project is only undertaken "with the sincere intentions of acting on the results."

"Basically, we're here in the best interest of both employees and management," he said.

Semple pointed out that his company has been doing this kind of research for the past 26 years.

"We have had excellent cooperation from employee groups in a variety of types of companies, such as oil producers and industrial firms, as well as hospitals," he said. "We've had a great deal of success in making these better places to work."

#### Confidential Questionnaire

He said employees will be notified a few days in advance of the exact time they may participate in the survey.

They will be called together in groups of 40-100. Each group will be shown an eight-minute slide

presentation which will explain the survey.

NSRC staff will instruct the group on the mechanics of the questionnaire, which will take 35-40 minutes to complete. No administrators will be present during that time.

"Everyone will be asked not to sign the questionnaire," Semple said. "The completed questionnaires will be put into a secret ballot box, and NSRC staff are the only ones who handle it."

Semple emphasized that no one from the medical center would ever see any of the completed questionnaires.

#### Compiled Data Reported

"We anticipate that this 'pencil and paper' phase of the survey will be completed March 13. Several days are needed because we want to include everyone," he explained.

It will take several weeks to compile the data. Then a report will be written and the questionnaires will be destroyed.

"Once the data is taken from the questionnaires and punched on to IBM cards, all the questionnaires will be burned," Semple said, "and a staff member will supervise this to be sure they are all destroyed."

"There is absolutely no way we can trace any answer back to its source."

#### Well-Received by Hospital Employees

The NSRC survey has been "generally well-received by employees" of Cleveland's  
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**SWORD SWALLOWER?** — No, it is a model of a patient ready to be examined via an early endoscope. If you make the right diagnosis, his eyes will light up. He's part of an exhibit now on display in the Seeley G. Mudd Building. And while this fellow, modeled after an illustration in a 1907 endoscopy textbook, is not a sword swallower, one of his predecessors was. Earlier experiments (1868) were tried on such a "tolerant" patient, borrowed from the local circus. For more about the exhibit, see picture on page 2. *(Photo by John Becton)*

### Contact, Explanation Help Radiology Patients To Relax

By Ina Fried

You're having an x-ray examination and you're not happy about it. You can't have anything to eat or drink, and it seems as if you've been waiting forever.

Then an attractive woman with a friendly smile comes over to you. She explains the delay, apologizes for the inconvenience, offers you a newspaper or magazine and hands you a small flyer with a space for your comments.

Making a patient's visit as pleasant as possible is one of the goals of the Diagnostic Division of the Department of Radiology.

#### Relieving Anxiety

"Most patients are apprehensive when they come here," said Royce R. Osborn, former technical administrator. He coordinated a

system of patient education and assistance to help relieve that anxiety. The program is being continued under the direction of Eric Porter, now acting technical administrator.

At the time of examination, patients check in with the receptionist and are assigned to a waiting area. Then they are given the flyer explaining what happens next, introducing "people behind the scenes" such as film processing specialists and file clerks, and asking for comments on their treatment by members of the department.

"We wanted to explain some of the inconveniences they had to suffer," Osborn said. "We had a space problem and we wanted to let them know we were aware of it. They

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**GOOD WILL AMBASSADOR**—O'Daniel Williams, right, radiology clinic coordinator, makes the visit of Roxie Cash, a patient from Louisburg, more pleasant. She offers reading material and helps explain procedures, delays or inconveniences. *(Photo by Sally Herndon)*