

Clinical Research—A New Concept of Medicine Comes to Duke

We at Duke are learning to take progress in stride as we witness the growth of the hospital over the past few years. With the admission of this baby, Duke Hospital launches its Clinical Research Program—a program which promises to be another milestone at Duke Hospital.

Since the first public announcement of this program at the end of October, Duke employees have heard the term clinical research mentioned, but because it is so "high-sounding," probably many haven't a clear notion of just what it means.

Dr. Barnes Woodhall, Duke Medical School dean, tells us that the purpose of clinical research is "the careful study of what takes place in various disease states" with "precise evaluation of the effectiveness of new drugs and treatment methods."

Dr. Frank Engel, professor of medicine, under whose direction the program has been established, explains that clinical research is "the development of new techniques for better treatment." This new unit will "extend, facilitate and speed up the usual services expected of a large university hospital."

The vital place of research has become recognized by the public in the past decade. As rapidly as research enables our physicians to offer more to the patient, the patient is entitled to benefit. While extensive research goes on every day in Duke's laboratories, the clinical facilities for studying and treating the patient with little understood disease have been



Seven-week old James Fussell has the honor of being one of the first patients admitted to Duke's Clinical Research Unit. Born with a mal-function of his adrenal gland, Jimmy will be carefully followed for a month or more. This complete evaluation will enable his physician, Dr. Robert Stempfel, to control his difficulty more effectively over the years. With round-the-clock special nursing (given here by Mrs. Eileen Clark, right) plus the added attraction of having his mother, Mrs. Hubert Fussell, left, of Rose Hill, N. C., rooming in with him, little Jimmy still seems unimpressed with his current lot in life!

(Photo by Sparks)

almost nonexistent. Even a wealthy patient finds a prolonged hospitalization hard to afford and for the occasional patient who could undergo such a study the highly trained staff necessary to support a clinical research study has not been available. For these reasons—the great expense and the lack of facilities—other privately endowed hospitals across the country have had similar difficulties.

For many years the federal government has tried in part to meet this need by the establishment of the National Institutes of Health as a research facility for the Public Health Service. There patients could be studied for prolonged periods at no expense to the patient. But as time went on this system was felt to be inadequate. After all, few patients can just pack up and go to Washing-