

# Anlyan Emphasizes Compassion for Patients

Dr. William G. Anlyan, vice president for health affairs, is urging his colleagues to place "far greater emphasis on humane, compassionate and dignified interactions with fellow human beings who have placed their lives in the hands of the physician."

Writing in last week's issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Anlyan warned that "high technology, exposure to multiple specialists and third-party payments are some elements that tend to fragment the historic patient-physician relationship and render it impersonal."

"Each patient," he said, "should be able to identify one physician who by education and training is

willing to become his advocate as well as the (medical) team leader."

Anlyan's statements are part of a guest editorial in the journal listing 21 personal recommendations that he believes could help to improve medical education before the year 2000.

## Other Suggestions

Among the other suggestions the physician made were:

—Each state or region should have a public-supported preparatory high school with a strong program in the sciences for gifted children whose parents live and work in small communities lacking such resources in their high schools. He cited the North Carolina School of Performing Arts in Winston-Salem as a

successful model in music, drama and dance.

—A national study should be made of "who does what to whom, where and when in health care" so that physicians and other health care professionals can use their time more effectively for the public good.

—There should be one qualifying examination for all recipients (United States and foreign medical graduates) of the M.D. degree before entry into residency training in this country.

—At least 50 per cent of all residency programs should be geared to the production of primary care physicians.

—All doctors should be recertified every five years through professional

organizations or state licensing boards rather than through governmental control.

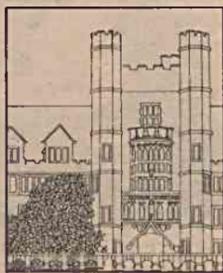
## 'Sleeping Giant'

—Continuing education programs, possibly the "sleeping giant" of medical education, should offer a variety of opportunities for practitioners since the best method of learning varies from individual to individual.

—Universities and colleges should share educational resources to concentrate on quality programs and to avoid unnecessary duplication. A student should not be confined to a single institution throughout his or her education, but should be allowed to transfer freely to wherever educational opportunities are greatest.

—Certain talented students should be offered, as early as their second year in college, admission to medical school after college so that they might pursue interests in the humanities and social sciences before beginning clinical training.

—More medical sciences faculty members should be actively involved in pre-medical advisory programs for undergraduates and greater use should be made of advisers throughout the course of medical education.



# Intercom

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**LIFE IN A GOLDFISH BOWL**—Kae Enright, a physician's associate, is spending some time underwater as a volunteer in experiments at Duke's F.G. Hall Laboratory for Environmental Research (hyperbaric chamber). Bud Shelton, another physician's associate who is conducting the research, said the work is designed to establish a more accurate method for measuring how compression and decompression in deep sea diving affect the body's absorption and elimination of gases. The ultimate goal, he added, is to produce safer tables that tell divers how quickly they can return to the surface without getting the "bends" after working beneath the sea. Enright called the experiments "fun, once you get over the initial shock of them closing the lid over the top." (Photo by Jim Wallace)

## Specialist Explains Misconceptions

### Poor Light Won't Hurt Eyes

By David Williamson

Read in poor light and just about anyone will tell you that you'll ruin your eyes doing it.

There's something funny about those words of warning, though — they are simply not true.

"Reading in dim light may be fatiguing just like it's fatiguing to walk two miles," said Dr. Joseph A. C. Wadsworth, chairman of the ophthalmology department at Duke.

"But you're not hurting your legs by walking, and you won't damage your eyes by using them, even if you don't have enough light," he said.

#### Misconceptions by the Dozen

The belief that inadequate lighting is harmful is just one of dozens of misconceptions about eyes and eye care that the specialist has heard again and again since he earned his M.D. 38 years ago.

In an interview in his Eye Center office, Wadsworth discussed some of these wives' tales about vision. Most are harmless, he said, but there are a few that are dangerous and need to be corrected.

The physician began by saying that carrots, widely believed to be good for the eyes, "have absolutely nothing to do with improving vision. A deficiency in vitamin A can retard night vision," he said, "but vitamin A is plentiful in butter, egg yolk, cheese, liver, fish oils, tomatoes and many other vegetables.

"No one eating close to a normal diet needs to worry about it."

#### Tiring, Not Harmful

The specialist was then asked whether wearing someone else's glasses that are too strong or too weak can damage eyes.

"No," he said. "It may be uncomfortable because everything is blurred, and you have to call on more muscles to focus, but there's no harm in it."

Wadsworth said that a person can neither read too much nor hold a book too closely, although such practices also can be tiring to eye muscles after extended periods.

A child who shows a tendency to be cross-eyed, however, should be taken to an ophthalmologist as soon as possible so that the problem can be corrected, he cautioned. The notion that the child will outgrow the condition in time is false, and to wait until he is six or seven years old can result in permanently weakened vision in one eye.

#### Drops Put the Red In

Is regular rinsing of the eyes important?

"It's completely unnecessary unless you get something in your eye," Wadsworth said. Most commercial eye drops will make pollen or pollution-irritated eyes feel fresher and look whiter, but they have a disadvantage most people don't know about, he added.

"The drops work by shrinking the size of swollen blood vessels in the white of the eye," he explained. "But after the drops wear off, the eyes may be redder than they were originally. If the drops are used frequently, chronic redness can result because the tiny vessels lose their ability to contract normally."

Consumers should consult their pharmacists to purchase drops without "vasoconstricting" chemicals, the physician recommends, or better yet, use a teaspoon of boric acid in a pint of water.

The boric acid and water solution is healthier and costs only about five cents a pint instead of \$1.29 for just over half an ounce of other eye wash.

"Of course, boric acid doesn't come in as pretty containers," he said.

(Continued on page 2)