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LATIN AMERICAN CANCER RESEARCH
INFORMATION PROJECT (LACRIP)

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PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Latin American Cancer Research
Information Project (LACRIP)

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INTRODUCTION

The LACRIP programme is designed to represent cancer related activities in Latin America and to assist Latin American research investigators, clinicians, and administrative personnel in development of better approaches to the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of cancer in Latin America.

It is intended to open new channels of communication, disseminate information on latest advances in the field, and identify areas of possible collaborative activity involving epidemiological studies, basic and clinical research, and cancer control programmes. This PAHO initiative operates in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute, U.S.A. and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC).

A. Specific LACRIP objectives may be summarized as follows:

1. To identify in Latin America the major institutions and centres devoted to cancer research, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation and related activities.
   To assist the UICC in editing and up-dating entries in the International Directory of Specialized Cancer Research and Treatment Establishments.
2. To locate, collect and disseminate published articles, abstracts of cancer research literature, proceedings of scientific meetings, and descriptions of ongoing cancer research projects in Latin America that may be integrated into the International Cancer Research Data Bank Programme (ICRDB).

3. To provide for dissemination of ICRDB services in Latin America.

4. To determine appropriate areas for collaborative cancer research as well as for comprehensive programmes of cancer control in Latin America.

PAHO has a representative office in each of its Member Countries. In addition, a national coordinator for the project has already been identified in each of nine countries (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela), with a view to a progressive inclusion of other countries. These coordinators are assisting in the implementation of each of the objectives listed above.

The role of the country coordinators and other responsible officers assigned by the Ministries of Health is critical to success in meeting these objectives, because it is through them that the information and programme support needs of cancer research
investigators, of physicians, and of others concerned with the problem of cancer, can be identified and met. It is essential that they be kept informed and closely involved in the operation of the programme.

B. Planning and Progress to Date on this Collaborative Effort have Centered in these Activities:

1. Institutions and Centers for Research and Treatment

The PAHO Country Representative in each country is providing an updated list of the Institutions and Centers devoted to cancer.

Contact is also being kept with the coordinators and key staff at each Center who can provide the needed information for screening and forwarding to the International Union Against Cancer, for inclusion in the International Directory of Specialized Cancer Research and Treatment Establishments.

The 1976 edition included thirty six entries from Latin America.

2. Role of the Regional Library of Medicine

The PAHO Regional Library of Medicine and the Health Sciences (PAHO-KLM), located in São Paulo, Brazil, will provide the services to develop and implement mechanisms for identifying, collecting, and supplying to the ICRDB
Programme those Latin American published articles dealing with cancer research, as well as proceedings of professional meetings (as abstracts of those papers relating to cancer research); and RLM will assist in providing ICRDB services to scientists in Latin America.

a) PAHO-RLM will participate in the distribution of information from the ICRDB data base, including publications and other information material produced by the ICRDB Programme, in Latin American countries. Distribution includes biomedical libraries, scientists doing cancer or cancer-related research, and clinicians, both oncologists and general practitioners.

b) It will also participate in screening, abstracting, and supplying copies of articles on cancer or cancer-related subjects published or to be published in Latin American journals, in order to speed their inclusion in CANCERLINE.

c) CANCERLINE data bases might be available through RLM's affiliation with the MEDLINE/Brazil System. Meanwhile, on line searches will be available at PAHO Central Office.
3. **On-going Research, and Forthcoming Scientific Meetings**

Coordinators for country activity serve as the focal point to collect data about on-going cancer research projects within their countries or areas, to be supplied to the ICRDB Programme. They will also be asked to identify professional meetings at which explanation of the LACRIP programme may be desirable, either as a presentation of a paper, or in a seminar/workshop, or as materials for distribution at the meeting.

For **on-going research**, PAHO keeps in close contact and collaborates with the ICRDB Programme's Current Cancer Research Project Analysis Center (CCRESPAC). Of particular concern to both are the procedures for collecting data within each country or area and the preparation of special LACRIP Bulletins covering segments of the field of cancer of particular interest to Latin American participants. Country coordinators are kept informed by LACRIP of the tentative schedules of publication of CCRESPAC's series of technical bulletins known as "Special listings", and copies of these for participating investigators go to coordinators to ensure proper distribution.

Around 180 on-going research project abstracts from Latin America had been received and processed by the start of June, 1977, and included in Special Listings and LACRIP Bulletins of on-going research now in production.
Each publication encompasses a specific area of cancer research.

Primary distribution of these will be to investigators represented in them, although they will also serve to stimulate interest in participation on the part of libraries, health agencies, funding agencies, hospitals and clinics, other research institutions, and individual physicians.

4. **Other Areas of Collaborative Activity**

a) Identify opportunities for collaboration in research, and facilitate communication between interested parties.

b) Identify opportunities for collaborative programmes for cancer treatment. For chemotherapy, institutions and clinical investigators have been identified to participate in trials of standard protocols as part of clinical cooperative programmes, and facilitate arrangements for the conduct of such programmes.

c) Preparation of field evaluation of the English and Portuguese version of ICD-O (International Classification of Disease for Oncology) and the WHO Standardized Manual for Cancer Registries (Hospital-Based).
d) Identify opportunities for more comprehensive or multi-faceted cancer control programmes, combining approaches to both early diagnosis and treatment, and including physician education and training along with education of the public. These would be based on knowledge of existing diagnostic programmes and health care delivery systems in local communities, and would require assessment of the feasibility of adaptation of such systems.

While the actual work undertaken on activities identified in this way would be funded from other sources, it is appropriate that the LACRIP program should serve as a resource for health planning as well as for laboratory research. If it does serve in this way it will prove of direct medical benefit to Latin American countries, and therefore of socioeconomic benefit as well.

e) Use of the UICC-International Directory, as a resource in locating appropriate institutions for collaborative efforts. Encourage emphasis on the strengthening of existing institutions.