Howard: a major 'teaching hospital'

By James S. Tinney

WASHINGTON — A name. A bridge.

Neither of these is unusual. Everybody has a name, for instance. And nearly every city has its share of bridges of one kind or another.

But the name to which reference is made here is a very special one: Howard University Hospital.

And the bridge is also strategic, linking as it does the hospital with the buildings housing the Colleges of Dentistry and Medicine.

Taken together, these two things symbolize the intimate relationship which exists between the university and the medical center — a relationship which proudly earns for HUH the designation of "teaching hospital."

The same may be said for this hospital as is often said for the university: More than half of all the black physicians and dentists in the entire nation have gotten some of their training here at this medical center (including, of course, the hospital under its former name of Freedmen's Hospital).

Also a larger percentage of medical professionals from throughout Africa and the entire black diaspora have received training here, than at any other single American hospital.

These facts alone lend a certain air of prestige to this institution. Indeed, these are facts of which the world needs to be reminded.

Not only the past, but the present and the future likewise augur a tremendous contribution by HUH to the benefit of mankind.

In July 1967, the hospital was formally transfered to complete control by the university. This step in itself made possible more efficient management, closer cooperation for patient care and more extensive medical education and research. Further, it gave the hospital and university an envied relationship not even at the disposal of some well-known schools such as Harvard and Johns Hopkins — despite desires by some persons at those places to have their own teaching hospitals.

In 1969, Howard established the Center for Health Sciences, an umbrella administrative unit which contained the College of Medicine, the College of Dentistry, the College of Pharmacy and Pharmacal Sciences, the College of Nursing, the university's student health service, (and later, the College of Allied Health Sciences).

Under the supervision of Dr. Carlton P. Alexis, HU vice president for health affairs, this center has been able to coordinate budgetary needs, health education planning, research opportunities and community health outreaches. The hospital, here again, is benefiting from this arrangement.

Since the construction of the new hospital facilities, completed in 1975, the potential role of HUH in educating black medical professionals has been expanded.

In the Freedmen's Hospital (as HUH was formerly known) there were insufficient laboratories for clinical research. But the new structure provides 23 spacious, fully-equipped research laboratories, plus an additional 17 service labs.

Not only this, but actual classrooms and laboratories are located on each floor above the base levels of the new hospital, enabling medical faculty to attend patients, do research and teach, all on the same floor. This arrangement, as a matter of course, maximizes the time a doctor can spend in a teaching capacity and is unique among teaching hospitals.

Students, of course, benefit from this arrangement. They also benefit from training received by working with the best stroke, radiation therapy and organ transplant units of any hospital in the city.

In the future, they will also benefit from training connected with the new Cancer Research Center, soon to be constructed on location at the hospital — one of only eight such centers planned for the entire nation.

Much of this is a part of the increasing focus on this institution as a "teaching hospital" which has been evident since the Council on Medical Education of the predominantly - white American Medical Association granted approval of all the hospital's training programs in 1971. This recognition encompassed all residencies and internships as well.

A new curriculum plan now in effect strives to enhance the training health professionals receive here, by combining medical, dental, nursing and pharmacal students as part of the health delivery team.

Under the direction of Marion Mann, dean of the College of Medicine, 124 new physicians with M.D. degrees were produced this year. (There are only 6,600 black physicians in this country — approximately 2 per cent of the total). Overall, nearly 500 undergraduate students in medicine are currently enrolled in this medical center.

Of these, juniors and seniors both are required to do clerkships at HUH. Because of the extremely high student-faculty ratio (nearly 1:1), the possibilities for heightened supervision and learning are increased.

Each year, more HU post-graduate physicians continue their internships at Howard University Hospital than at any other single hospital. Altogether, nearly 60 per cent of the house staff at HUH are Howard alumni.

Students in the College of Dentistry, under Dr. Jeanne C. Sinkford, dean, also are involved in clinical training at the hospital during both junior and senior years.

These, together with dental hygiene students and postgraduate students in oral surgery, orthodontics and pedodontics, utilize the oral surgery out-patient clinic on the second floor of the hospital and the general dental offices and laboratories on the fourth floor.

In addition, this medical center has developed the world's first convertible clinic laboratory for dentistry teaching. This facility provides the settings for sit-down and lie-down dentistry for the patient, a life-like manikin for pre-clinical students, and a treatment care delivery facility for both patients and clinical students. An even larger convertible clinic, on this same order, was opened in 1975.

The 78 full-time, and approximately 100 part-time, dentists make up the best dental facilities in the world.

While the College of Pharmacy and Pharmacal Sciences has always had the reputation of being among the finest,

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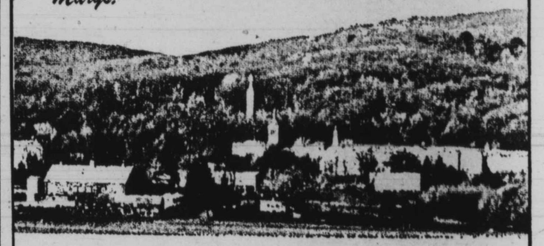

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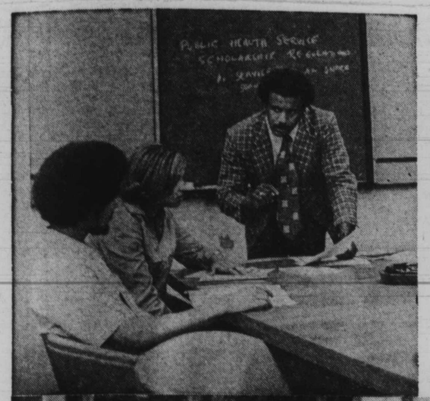

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