



D13 SY #199

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

TUFTS UNIVERSITY

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 02155

November 25, 1970

Statement of Dean William F. Maloney, School of Medicine

The Boston newspapers, Tuesday morning, carried stories reporting that the Tufts School of Medicine is terminating its sponsorship of the Columbia Point and Delta Health Centers. The stories also reported that the school's Department of Community Health and Social Medicine is being disbanded, implying that these meant a discontinuation of Tufts' community health education and care efforts.

We have not decided to terminate our involvement with the two Centers and we have a commitment to community medicine that we do not intend to abandon.

As recently as October 20 we informed the community and staff in Mississippi that we would continue our sponsorship of that program if they wished us to do so. That continues to be our intention.

On October 22, we told the Columbia Point Health Association, representatives of Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) and health center staff that we would continue to sponsor that program, again if they wished us to do so. This is also an unwavering intention.

Another point needs to be stressed. The decision to discontinue the Department of Community Health and Social Medicine, which was made by a faculty committee and accepted by me, represents a change in the way in which the school organizationally will approach education in community health care. It signals not a cessation of our interest but an intensification. We are involved in an ongoing consideration of more effective methods of achieving this.

Among the varied and improved ways of dealing with community health care education which are now under discussion are ones which would involve virtually all departments of the School of Medicine and possibly of the entire University. We believe that community medicine should be a basic part of the educational program and professional concern of medical school faculty and students generally.

Following is the statement which I made Monday night, November 23, concerning this matter.

"We have for some time been considering how to increase this Medical Center's community health activities. In the midst of this, we learned that Dr. H. Jack Geiger, Professor and Acting Chairman of the Department of Community Health and Social Medicine (CHASM), was considering offers at other Medical Centers and would probably soon accept one of them, though we have no official resignation.

"Learning that, I along with Mr. David L. Everhart, Executive Director of the Hospital, Dean Louis J.P. Calisti of the Dental School, and others, began an intensive review of the entire area of community medicine and ambulatory care at the Medical Center. We recognize that the Medical Center faces the necessity of reorganizing itself to improve the provision of health services to our community on an ambulatory basis. With this thought in mind we are now looking at the whole broad range of ambulatory services, including clinics, emergency care, etc., with a view toward designing a total program of meaningful care for this community.

"Intervening also in this was the resignation of the Director of the Home Care program, which had long been a service of CHASM, and which was becoming difficult to maintain as a quality service. Following serious consideration, we reluctantly suspended the activities of that program until such time as we could design an improved service in its place as a part of our overall reorganization. In so doing, we transferred those chronically ill patients being cared for under that program to other services of the Hospital where medical supervision could be maintained.

"The Medical Center has matured to the point where we realize that responsibility for activities such as those of community medicine can be better shared among several clinical departments rather than to have such responsibility isolated in one department. We believe this approach will provide an improved, broader, and more comprehensive kind of total service.

"In the meantime, the teaching of community health and social medicine for our students will continue, and we are taking this opportunity to increase and strengthen our involvement in solutions to community health problems.

"The question of our relationship with the Columbia Point Health Center and the Delta Health Center in Mound Bayou, Mississippi, depends upon these community groups. Due to Dr. Geiger's close relationship with both, his contemplated resignation has caused reconsideration by these communities of their situation and circumstances. Tufts will continue its active involvement in both Centers if this is the course of action these community groups believe is in their own best interests."

William F. Maloney, M.D.
Dean
Tufts University School of Medicine
November 23, 1970