

of home and office medical care for the indigent and the medically indigent. We are providing nursing home care for public assistance clients. We are particularly proud that these services have been integrated into a continuous system. But with all of this, our task is not finished, and we must continue our efforts to meet the special medical needs of the aged.

I am strongly convinced that emphasis needs to be placed upon home care services. It is neither humane nor economical to treat an older sick person in a hospital when he can be treated as well at home. By treating him in the familiar home environment, or speedily returning him there after hospital treatment, the patient is happier and the cost of hospitalization is reduced.

I am concerned about the increasing numbers of chronically ill and elderly disabled persons in general hospitals, chronic-disease hospitals, mental hospitals and nursing homes. An adequate auxiliary home-care service for such patients would greatly relieve our over-burdened institutions. Concern with this problem prompted me to provide funds in my last budget for further research on the subject of nursing homes and their place in the care of aged people—research to determine especially whether many suffering from some degree of senility might not be cared for better outside of mental institutions.

Our problem in planning, it seems to me, is to create a program in which we place the right patient in the right bed at the right time and for the right length of time. It is also imperative that every community resource be employed in this effort. Otherwise, it will become financially impossible to build enough hospitals to accommodate our older people in years to come.

At this moment, my office has under consideration a plan offered by a brilliant young physician, Dr. Mason Lord, of the Baltimore City Hospitals, and sent to me with the recommendation of the State Department of Health and the Commission on the Aging. Its purpose is to insure the best possible care for our older citizens, and at the same time to assure the release of patients from intensive hospital care just as soon as conditions will permit it.

I have noted the fact that *many of the older people of the country* have incomes insufficient to supply their basic needs. Many plans are being advanced to remedy this condition. *On the federal level*, it has been proposed that the Social Security Act be amended to increase retirement benefits, that federal assistance be offered to provide decent