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PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

22 February 94

Mrs. Clinton —

She attached is a follow to your request after talking with Ray.

CKRasco

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Chief of Staff

Washington, D.C. 20201

FEB 18 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR CAROL H. RASCO

FROM: Kevin Thurm

SUBJECT: Phone Conversation with Roy Clinton

Dr. Michael McGinnis, a Deputy Assistant Secretary to Phil Lee in charge of disease prevention and health promotion activities spoke with Roy Clinton on Wednesday evening, February 16. A summary of that conversation follows.

Roy Clinton expressed his interest in engaging Washington Regional Medical Systems (Fayetteville, Arkansas) in a program targeted to education on wellness and preventive medicine for K-12 students in the two to four counties they serve. He apparently has already had some communication with Ken Cooper's Clinic in Dallas on the subject. His interest derives from his concern that our system is misguided when "we're spending 99 percent of our dollars on disease treatment and 1 percent on wellness, especially when you look at the kinds of challenges that confront our children now and in the future."

He is willing to invest between $100,000 and $250,000 in a program to provide K-12 health education, including the commitment of several staff nurses to provide the education (it was not clear whether the amounts include salary equivalents). To avoid problems with the school board over curriculum content, he wants to have the hospital run the programs directly but use the school's classrooms for instruction.

Dr. McGinnis advised Roy Clinton that some organizations have already developed and tested effective K-12 health education curricula and he promised to provide him with sample curricular materials. Dr. McGinnis also offered the services of Dr. Robert St. Peter, (Dr. St. Peter coordinates our Children and Schools programs) as an ongoing contact for Roy or a member of his staff. I understand from Dr. McGinnis that Roy seemed pleased with the discussion and grateful for the help.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 15, 1994

TO: Kevin Thurm

FROM: Carol H. Rasco

SUBJECT: A call to return

Roy Clinton is chairman of the Washington Regional Medical Systems in Fayetteville, Arkansas. He was referred to us by Hillary Clinton about an educational program for wellness and preventive medicine. His question: Is there a national curriculum already in place for such a program? If not, he says they are prepared to invest 1/4 million to develop this program, but doesn't want to interfere with anything that's already in the works. He can be reached at (501)442-6455, 92 Lovers Lane, Fayetteville, AR 72701 or the Executive Secretary is Janet Absher at (501)442-1070.

Please call my assistant, Rosalyn Miller with the name of the person on your staff who will be contacting Roy. We will call Roy and tell him to expect a call from the person you name. Also, I will need a follow up memorandum from you after this call is made in order to brief the President and First Lady.

Thank you.

Dr. McGinnis → 205-8611

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

July 26, 1994

David Trimble, Jr., M.D.
Senior Staff Physician
Department of Medicine, Ambulatory Care
Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center
4801 Linwood Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64128

Dear Dr. Trimble:

Thank you for your letter about the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care system and for your support of the President's health reform proposal. You mentioned in your letter that the role of the VA should be expanded under health care reform. The President and I wholeheartedly agree that reform should prepare the VA system to deliver the high quality, affordable health care that our nation's veterans deserve.

As you pointed out, VA facilities are staffed by talented and dedicated health professionals and have a long history of providing quality care to our veterans. Yet, today, the VA health care system must overcome numerous regulatory and financial barriers to serve our veterans. As you know, the current VA system must contend, for example, with prohibitions against receiving reimbursement from private insurance, complex eligibility rules, and restrictive personnel and contracting requirements.

Reform will free the VA system to provide high quality, affordable health care. Under the President's plan, veterans will be able to enroll in VA health plans that provide the comprehensive package of benefits guaranteed to all Americans as well as additional services that target the particular health needs of veterans. Veterans with service-connected disabilities or low incomes will receive all of those services at no cost to them. Those veterans who do not enroll in a VA health plan may continue to receive the supplemental services that they are eligible to receive today, such as hearing aids and long-term care.

The President's plan prepares the VA system for its role in the new system by investing over $3 billion over a three year period to modernize and improve the VA system. In addition, for the first time, the VA will be able to collect Medicare and

private insurance payments. Finally, unnecessary and burdensome regulations will be reduced, freeing VA hospitals and doctors to concentrate on patients rather than paperwork.

Thank you again for writing to share your thoughts and concerns. I look forward to continuing to work with Congress to give our nation's veterans the health security they deserve.

Sincerely yours,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Hillary Rodham Clinton

May 27, 1994

Hillary Rodham Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Clinton:

With the turbulence of recent times and events, I felt compelled to forgo my usual anonymity and write a letter of support to you regarding your health care initiative. You should be aware that there is a wellspring of hidden support for your efforts among VA health care professionals. Many of us opted for the VA system many years ago because it was the closest thing to so-called socialized medicine that we could find. My colleagues and I had served in various capacities, such as store-front clinics, free health clinics, clinics in public housing projects, public hospitals and private practice before I came to the Kansas City VA seventeen years ago.

Theoretically, I could retire from the VA in three years, but my wife and I, as well as you and your husband, have been blessed with a now thirteen year old child who needs at least four years of high school, four years of college, plus four or more years of graduate training (two terms Clinton, two terms Gore, by my calculations), particularly if mine chooses to follow my family tradition of medicine which stretches back to 1898.

I also feel a certain kinship with your family since I am a graduate of Arkansas University Medical School, class of '65, and I was privileged to be under Dr. Joycelyn Elders' tutelage when she was a pediatric resident and I was a medical student there. In addition, my son's godfather is a physician in Little Rock. I maintain ties to the medical school as a member of the Arkansas Caduceus Club, composed of medical alumni, which provides medical school student loans and scholarships, as well as offering many other programs.

President Clinton made the inspired choice of Jesse Brown as Secretary of Veteran Affairs, and it has been applauded enthusiastically. Secretary Brown seems genuinely interested in the "VA family." His daily messages on our electronic computer mail have been very informative and quite positive. In the past, as a generalization, we received only negative feedback. Recently, he urged VA personnel to be "creative" with the rules, which I feel legitimized what most of us have been doing for years within rigid VA regulations.

I would like to suggest you consider expanding the VA role in the future of health care, rather than reducing its role as some have proposed. A single change would eliminate more than half of current veterans' complaints, according to my recent independent

survey of some of our eligibility clerks and members of the Disabled American Veterans service organization: Every honorably discharged veteran should be eligible for everything the VA system has to offer. It can be a particularly poignant moment when, because of "eligibility criteria," a VA health care provider is unable to even temporarily provide a set of crutches to a veteran who has been acutely injured, but who does not require hospitalization. Those veterans who have suffered a military-related injury or illness should continue to receive additional monetary compensation.

The VA system occupies a unique position regarding future health care reform. Certain battles being fought in the private sector have already been resolved in the VA system, and with resultant savings. The VA has learned to pool resources and manpower. Each hospital does not require each and every new "bell" or "whistle." For example, our pharmacy drug formulary is "closed," therefore all drugs are not available to practitioners. In general, if there are two or more similar drugs, the cheapest, based on competitive bidding, is the only one used. As directives come from the VA Central Office they are implemented, rather than argued about endlessly.

Despite being a bureaucracy, the VA system quite successfully changed in the early 1980's from providing essentially inpatient care only, to include an active outpatient Ambulatory Care component as well. The VA system continues to provide both basic and clinical research, one example being the landmark, multi-hospital cooperative study identifying aspirin as an anti-stroke drug. I am certain that the VA can again change to embrace the essential features of the impending health care initiatives.

The Kansas City VA has been privileged to have a continuum of dedicated, visionary professionals. I would like to recognize a few of them individually:

Dr. James Kennedy has twenty years in the VA system, the last twelve as Chief of the Medicine Service. He continues to be an outspoken advocate for the concept of an expanding Ambulatory Care section. He is an exceptional teacher with a strong research orientation.

Dr. Glenn Hodges has twenty years in the VA system as well, the last seven as the Chief of Staff here in Kansas City. In addition to his superior clinical and teaching skills, beginning in 1988 he became the major contributor and guiding force in the development of a comprehensive Quality Assurance (QA) program for this Medical Center, which has grown into one of the best such programs in the VA system.

A relatively new member of our team is the current director, Mr. William Wright. Along with Drs. Hodges, Kennedy and others, he helped lead our Medical Center during the most recent JCAHO inspection in attaining an approval rating of 97, one of the

survey of some of our eligibility clerks and members of the Disabled American Veterans service organization: Every honorably discharged veteran should be eligible for everything the VA system has to offer. It can be a particularly poignant moment when, because of "eligibility criteria," a VA health care provider is unable to even temporarily provide a set of crutches to a veteran who has been acutely injured, but who does not require hospitalization. Those veterans who have suffered a military-related injury or illness should continue to receive additional monetary compensation.

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A relatively new member of our team is the current director, Mr. William Wright. Along with Drs. Hodges, Kennedy and others, he helped lead our Medical Center during the most recent JCAHO inspection in attaining an approval rating of 97, one of the

highest ever received. Under Mr. Wright's direction the Kansas City VA has consistently met or exceeded our Medical Care Cost Recovery goals. Most recently, he has taken a strong leadership role in re-inventing the VA version of government with the concept of Total Quality Improvement, with a series of position papers, statements, locally produced videos, and with forums which have included question and answer sessions addressing our future mission.

I have recently been selected as a finalist for the position of Associate Chief of Staff for Ambulatory Care. If I am fortunate enough to be selected, I look forward to working with the above mentioned individuals, the rest of the staff, and you and your husband, to help bring the VA system into the 21st century. If I am not selected, I feel certain that any other VA career physician would have similar views as mine, and would be very supportive of your efforts.

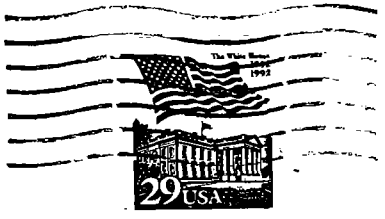
Sincerely,

David Trimble Jr. MD

David Trimble, Jr., M.D.
Senior Staff Physician
Department of Medicine, Ambulatory Care
Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center
4801 Linwood Boulevard
Kansas City, MO 64128

cc: President Bill Clinton
Honorable Jesse Brown
Mr. William G. Wright
Glenn R. Hodges, M.D.
James Kennedy, M.D.

David Trimble Jr. M.D.
10103 Nall
Overland Park, Kansas
66207



Hillary Rodham Clinton
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500