

## EDITORIAL

In recent years, pressures on all aspects of the drug industry have increased noticeably. The issues range from the cost of drugs to the scientific information applicable to their research, development, manufacture, and quality assurance.

Our working environment has changed and will continue to be changed by these pressures. Forces are at work that will affect drug research and development for the next decade and beyond. Many of those persons seeking change are pharmacists. In addition, consumerists and politicians are becoming more active in demanding change.

Those persons lobbying for change are presenting scientific data to the public and to practitioners both in and out of the context of the original experiments. Misrepresentations of scientific data have been distressingly frequent in recent years.

For example, politicians and consumerists knew that they had "surefire" headlines when they

spoke of 100,000 deaths annually due to adverse reactions. However, a 1974 report by Medicine in the Public Interest, Inc. says that adverse drug reaction estimates of this magnitude are unreliable because of incomplete, unrepresentative, uncontrolled, and statistically deficient data. In spite of this, the 100,000 figure continues to be "fact" simply because it has been repeated so often.

It is imperative that industrial and academic scientists become--and remain--knowledgeable about the "politics" of pharmacy. It is in this forum where often conclusions from data are being shaped to meet the needs of their users.

More importantly, pharmaceutical scientists must insure--yes, demand--that data be generated and presented in a most objective manner. Each point that is made must be supported by the best science we know how to practice. To allow otherwise is an abdication of our primary responsibility to society and to the health professions.

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