

EDITORIAL

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE HACETTEPE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

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The Editorial of the April issue of this Journal stressed the need for more medical schools in Turkey. It was suggested in this Editorial that the facilities and staff of the Hacettepe Medical Center could become the nucleus of a new Hacettepe School of Medicine. Since then, this project has been realized in fact.

Preparations for this new medical school had been going on for many years, and during the past months the last step - final acceptance of the legal status of the school - was taken. A brief history of this transformation may be of interest to the readers of the Journal.

Hacettepe Children's Hospital opened its doors to pediatric patients in 1957. In a short time, it became apparent that the hospital would have to expand in order to serve the community more effectively. Within two years, departments of orthopedic surgery, neurosurgery, general surgery, cardiology including cardiovascular surgery, hematology, endocrinology, allergy, and others, were established to meet the pressing medical needs of the community. Some of these departments, such as allergy and neurosurgery, were the only ones of their kind in the city. Thus, willingly or unwillingly, the hospital had to accept those adults whose illnesses could not be diagnosed or treated elsewhere in the country and who had been referred to Hacettepe by other institutions. In other fields, including radiology, anesthesiology, and cardiovascular surgery, the most modern services were being offered at Hacettepe. These circumstances made the establishment of a «Hacettepe General Hospital» *fait accompli*.

Very soon the need for ancillary medical staff was apparent. Nursing personnel are needed all over the world, but nowhere was the problem more acute than in Turkey at that time. Professional hospital dieticians and physiotherapists were practically non-existent in this country, nor was there any institution for training in these fields. Trained medical technicians were also lacking and were acutely needed in a training and research center like Hacettepe. So, in the year 1961, new schools of Health Sciences and Nursing were

established for the training of nurses, physiotherapiats, dieticians, and medical technicians. High school graduates who passed the aptitude tests for admission to the University were admitted to these schools, which will award diplomas equivalent to B. Sc. degrees after four years of instruction.

With a large teaching staff in practically all fields of medicine, surgery, and basic sciences, the birth of the new Hacettepe School of Medicine was both easy and natural. This year 100 students will be admitted to the pre - medical year. This new school is more than just another teaching institution. It is in fact setting new standards in all medical fields, just as, in 1957, Hacettepe Children's Hospital set new standards in pediatric practice, teaching and research.