

news

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT DALLAS

southwestern medical school ■ graduate school of biomedical sciences ■ school of allied health sciences

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******UTHSCD neurologist to head national
epilepsy commission*

Dr. David D. Daly, professor and former chairman of the Department of Neurology at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas, has been appointed chairman of the new National Commission for the Control of Epilepsy and Its Consequences.

Established by Congress as a special agency to confront the problems of epilepsy in the United States, the committee consists of four physicians or scientists representing major disciplines involving epilepsy, two physicians or scientists representing public health and rehabilitation and three members of the general public.

Dr. Daly has been chairman of the International Commission on the Pharmacology of Anti-epileptic Drugs, International League Against Epilepsy; president of the American EEG Society; a member of the editorial board for the journal, Neurology, and a member of the Public Health Service Advisory Committee on the Epilepsies.

Dr. Daly came to Southwestern Medical School in 1966 after having been on the faculties of Arizona State University, University of Minnesota Graduate School and Mayo Clinic and Foundation.

The educator holds both M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Minnesota.

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The mandate given to the new National Epilepsy Commission is that it:

1. Make a comprehensive study of the state of the art of medical and social management of the epilepsies in the United States.
2. Investigate and make recommendations concerning the proper roles of federal and state governments and national and local, public and private agencies in research, prevention, identification, treatment and rehabilitation of persons with epilepsy.
3. Develop a comprehensive national plan for the control of epilepsy and its consequences based on the most thorough, complete and accurate data and information available on the disorder.

The formation of the commission and the charge given it constitute an "unusual mandate," in the opinion of Dr. Daly:

"If you look at the problems of epileptic persons anywhere in the world--regardless of the health care system they are in--there are serious inadequacies in identification, treatment and rehabilitation.

Dr. Daly estimated that in some countries--even with organized medical systems--approximately 25 per cent of persons with epilepsy have never been seen by a physician.

The long interval between onset of symptoms and identification of the disease is due--in part--to the fact that "epilepsy isn't a single disease any more than cancer is a single disease."

It is, he said, "a disorder due to many different causes which can attack from birth to old age."

Until relatively recent times, there were very few drugs available for treatment of the epileptic, but now there are quite a number of agents new on the market.

Physicians will have to know more about the specific drugs involved for certain types of seizures, he said. Not the least of the problems of the persons with epilepsy are insurance and job security and availability, Dr. Daly noted.

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