

C O P Y

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI
College of Medicine
General Hospital

Eden and Bethesda Avenues
Laboratory of Applied Physiology

Cincinnati, Ohio
January 16, 1936.

Mr. Charles Wesley Dunn
608 Fifth Avenue
New York City, New York

Dear Mr. Dunn:

Without entering into further discussion of the precise role which should be played by the University Laboratory in matters such as we have had under consideration, I am complying with your request that I give my own analysis or interpretation of the "public responsibility" clause of the agreement as drafted by you.

As a member of this medical faculty, I am accustomed to assuming some responsibility for the welfare of individual patients and for the health of the community as a whole on matters on which I am informed. As a doctor and an investigator, I am not unaware of the necessity of maintaining strictly confidential relationships. In all the work done in this Laboratory on behalf of various industries I maintain the dual attitude of the doctor who has a patient to whom he must maintain a confidential relationship and who, at the same time, as an investigator and teacher is charged with a responsibility for the dissemination of useful information to his colleagues. In general, this is not very difficult.

In the present instance, I and the staff are interested chiefly in the solution of the public health problem. If it is satisfactorily solved the publication of that fact is not likely to be a matter of general scientific or medical importance. On the other hand, any matter of real scientific importance or of general significance to medical men which might develop out of the work should be made available through the proper channels. It would be my duty under these circumstances to see that the information be given in such a manner as not to injure those who in good faith had come to us and had worked with us in the solution of their problem.

In my experience no great difficulty is experienced in satisfying both of the above purposes. A spirit of fairness and impartiality and some understanding of basic human values, as well as of mutual interests, is required of all parties involved. Frank open discussion of any controversial details may confidently be expected to prevent difficulties.

I trust that the above statement clarifies my position to your satisfaction. Obviously, I can go no further since I cannot take any position which is prejudicial to the exercise of my best judgment as the facts develop.

Very cordially yours,

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Robert A. Kohn