

October 25, 1988

Mr. Peter Alexis, Executive Director
Psychiatric Institute, Fort Worth
815 Eighth Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76104

Dear Mr. Alexis,

In response to the inquiry by Ms. Robin Moore, I enclose the information requested. I know of no official standards for credentialing practitioners, nurses or anesthesiologists in electroconvulsive therapy. The American Psychiatric Association has a Task Force which is now considering guidelines of ECT treatment, privileging, and training; that report is due late in 1989.

There are two academic programs for training practitioners in ECT; one under the supervision of C. E. Coffey and R. Weiner at Duke University, and the second under the supervision of L. Greenberg and myself at Stony Brook. Both are five-day, 'hands-on' courses, and carry CME credit hours. The Duke University program has a special course for nurses; we invite nurses and anesthesiologists to take part in our program.

Many teaching materials are already available, including textbooks, videotapes, and journals. In our course, we provide these materials to our students as part of their fee. Some descriptions are enclosed for your use.

The question of a visiting lecture series was raised. It is possible for a faculty member from our program to visit your hospital and lecture on ECT. Such practice is rather standard for us; I have just completed such a tour of the seven medical schools in the Netherlands. It is also possible to survey the standard of practice; examine the facilities and records of ECT; and to provide a report on the degree to which the program meets established standards of care (using the 1978 APA Task Force report as a guide; or the proposed guidelines when these appear). We can assist in preparing a manual of procedures for ECT at your facility.

I was told that there are six PIA hospitals in Texas alone (and 52 in the nation). With that base, it should also be possible to develop a special training program at one of your facilities, by importing two or three of the faculty from Stony Brook for a few days, to provide representatives from each of the PIA facilities with an opportunity to become acquainted with present standards of care. Fees for such services would be negotiated probably on the basis of the daily rates usually provided for consultations off-site; a copy of those rates is attached.

I trust these remarks are helpful. Good luck in your efforts.

Sincerely yours,

Max Fink, M.D.
Professor of Psychiatry