

# Special Coverage of APA Annual Meeting in This Issue

## PSYCHIATRIC PROGRESS

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### NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

#### 'Informed Consent' Viewed As No Obstacle to Research

**A**DHERENCE BY PSYCHIATRISTS to the recent rulings of the National Institutes of Health concerning "informed consent" will help rather than severely limit the validity of research results.

This observation by three Johns Hopkins psychiatrists was reported to the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association on the basis of experience with a number of psychopharmacological studies undertaken at the Henry Phipps Psychiatric Clinic.

"Preconceived biases concerning this issue should be avoided," urged Dr. Lee C. Park. He urged "further objective experimental exploration of the effects on both subjects and researchers of furnishing information usually withheld in clinical psychiatric experimentation."

Dr. Park and his associates, Drs. Lino Covi and E.H. Uhlenhuth, concluded that when psychiatrists routinely inform patients of the key aspects of the research project, both the welfare of the patient and doctor-patient rapport will be better protected.

Furthermore, they said, a subject's preconceived notions and prior experiences determine his expectations to a degree that they are not easily shaken by information about the research. As a consequence, Dr. Park said, "informed consent will not limit studies, but can even be a valuable asset to research design."