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EDITORIAL

Surgery and different forms of irradiation have long been the methods available for the treatment of malignant tumours and related lesions. The complicated, expensive apparatus needed for radiation therapy, and the technical difficulties, including those involving dose calculations, have meant that the radiation therapy in particular developed at special units, with close cooperation between physicians and physicists. Another reason for this concentration to special units was that wider experience could be gained regarding these diseases and their treatment if the patients were assembled at a limited number of hospitals. The treatment results could be reviewed with greater ease and the conclusions given a higher degree of validity. It became increasingly evident that basic biologic research was a requirement if a deeper knowledge regarding the malignant diseases and the effects of irradiation was to be gained. Special departments for radiation physics and biologic research were added to the therapeutic units or set up as separate institutes working in close collaboration with them. As time went by, various surgical disciplines also became involved in this cooperation.

In recent years, other methods of treatment such as chemotherapy and hormonal therapy have also been introduced and are playing an increasingly important role, either as a complement to the previous methods or as the only method of treatment. The significance of immunologic factors in the genesis and treatment of these diseases is becoming more and more evident, and in many quarters, including the Scandinavian

countries, this has led to a widening of the scope of the previous units for radiation therapy, to include the new treatment methods while at the same time taking advantage of all the organizing and therapeutic experience accumulated at those centres. Many of the old units have been turned into oncologic centres in which representatives from different specialities collaborate. This development will undoubtedly contribute towards increasing our knowledge regarding the malignant diseases and improving the effectiveness of the treatment.

The blue series of *Acta Radiologica* has hitherto been denoted as a series for radiation therapy, physics and biology. As from 1978, the journal will be published under the designation of oncology. This implies more than a mere change of name; it means that in accordance with its views on the uniform nature of oncology the journal will welcome articles dealing with all the various areas of this field, not only on the different forms of irradiation and radiation physics but also on epidemiologic and clinical aspects of malignant diseases as well as on hormonal therapy, chemotherapy, immunologic problems, and related basic research.

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