

## Preface

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This new periodical, the *Clinics in Geriatric Medicine*, should fill a need long felt—a recognition of the problems associated with the aging of the populations of developed nations. As birth rates decline and life spans increase, the percentages of the population aged 65, 75, and older continue to increase. The medical, social, and economic consequences of aging are particularly relevant to the Veterans Administration because the percentage of veterans over 65 is expected to increase from 11 per cent in 1980 to 37 per cent by the year 2000, and the absolute number of veterans aged 75 and older will reach almost 4 million at that time. It is not surprising, therefore, that the impetus for initiating this new journal came from a distinguished Veterans Administration physician, Chief of the Medical Service at the Martinez Veterans Administration Medical Center, Dr. Michael Geokas. The concern among physicians at the Martinez VAMC for the problems of aging is evident from the participation of its staff in many of the articles in this initial volume. However, there is, in addition, excellent representation of contributors from several leading medical institutions in the United States.

The first issue is indeed ambitious: it attempts to encompass a complete review of the structural and functional changes in organ systems associated with aging and should provide a sound scientific foundation for the issues to come. It can be expected that with this magnificent issue organized by Dr. Geokas as an example, the quality of subsequent issues will be maintained.

This *Clinics* series will make an important contribution to a better understanding of the aging process and should serve as a useful and powerful guide for the delivery of health care to our aged population.

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