

Draft 9/16/81

W.H. Adams

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Dear Mrs. Rubica,

I was recently given your "Notice of Demand of Doctor/Patient Confidentiality" dated September 1, 1981. Because you have been involved with the Brookhaven program for so many years, I thought I should first answer you myself rather than have the Brookhaven National Laboratory respond through official channels.

First, let me reassure you that the Laboratory does treat patients' records in accordance with ethical medical practices. There has never been an instance where a patient has been identified by name in any publication relating to information obtained by the Laboratory in the Marshall Islands. In this most important respect, your medical file has remained completely confidential. Furthermore, only the doctors and medically-related personnel on the BNL staff who are involved in the Marshall Islands Study have access to your file here at Brookhaven, which, along with all other records of Marshallese that are examined, are kept in locked rooms at our Hospital. This is the usual practice in any hospital. We may have, of course, given some of your records in the past to the hospitals in Majuro or Ebeye, so that doctors there would have the information if you were to become sick while in the Marshall Islands.

Second, it is important for you to realize that benefit from the publication of medical information gained in the Marshall Islands regarding radiation effects is worldwide.

I understand why you wish your medical information to remain confidential. Be assured, it will remain so, as it has in the past. I hope you will reconsider your "Notice", and decide to tell us to return it. However, I may not have explained matters clearly enough to you. For this reason, I would like to talk to you informally about the matter. I will return from our pediatric trip to the Marshall Islands in early November. If it is all right with you, I would like to contact you at that time in Honolulu. Perhaps you could then explain your

concerns to me. Mr. Bill Scott, whom you have known for years, would be happy to accompany me, if you wish. Please let me know if this is satisfactory.

Very sincerely yours,

WHA;gc

William H. Adams, M.D.  
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Island Study