

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN***Regents Communication***ACTION REQUEST****Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement****Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir**

**George H. Koepke, M.D.**, professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation in the Medical School, retired from active faculty status in 1976, after a most productive career as a clinician, teacher, and leader in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation (PM&R).

Dr. Koepke received his B.S. degree from the University of Toledo in 1945 and his M.D. degree from the University of Cincinnati in 1949. He completed his internship at the Toledo (Ohio) Hospital in 1950 and completed his PM&R residency at the University of Michigan in 1953 as the department's first resident. After a year in private practice, he joined the faculty in 1954 as an assistant professor. He was promoted to associate professor in 1958 and professor in 1966. He retired in 1976, after having served on the faculty for 22 years.

Dr. Koepke was a pioneer in the field of PM&R. Within the department, he founded the Electroneuromyography (EMG) Laboratory and developed the Division of Orthotics and Prosthetics for the care of patients with amputations. In the 1950s, at the height of the polio epidemic, Dr. Koepke developed and implemented new rehabilitation techniques for respirator-dependent patients. Working with Dr. Irving Feller on the treatment of burn patients, Dr. Koepke also became known as a national expert in burn rehabilitation. He was certified by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation in 1955 and served as its chair from 1970-76. He was a founding member of the American Association of Electrodiagnosis and Electromyography (now the American Association of Neuromuscular and Electrodiagnostic Medicine) and was one of its early presidents, and he was vice chair of the American Board of Electrodiagnosis and Electromyography from 1988-92. He was president of both the Washtenaw County Medical Society and the Michigan State Medical Society.

Dr. Koepke was a strong mentor and a major influence on trainees in the field of physical medicine and rehabilitation. He was instrumental in developing the science and rationale for the clinical aspects of PM&R, including electrodiagnostic medicine, peripheral neuropathy, amputation surgery, prosthetic rehabilitation, and rehabilitation of burns. He has had a significant, lasting influence on the field of PM&R.

The Regents salute this distinguished faculty member for his dedicated service by naming **George H. Koepke professor emeritus of physical medicine and rehabilitation.**

**Requested by:**

---

**Sally J. Churchill**  
Vice President and Secretary of the University

**February 2006**