

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES 1/  
1949-1951

State health agencies report that in most of their services under the maternal and child health programs they reached more mothers and children in 1951 than in 1949. This is in line with the trend of the post-war period. One of the reasons for the increase was the inclusion, for the first time, of data for a number of large local health departments, such as New York City, and several in California. However, even with the figures for these newly reporting health departments excluded, there was still an upward trend in most services. 2/

Many of the reported services increased from 1949 to 1950, and then again in 1951; several others recovered from a decline in 1950 to reach a new peak in 1951. The largest relative increase was in the number of children attending well child clinics. The principal decline was in the number of mothers given nursing service at delivery. This latter continued a long-term trend that is related to the increasing proportion of births in hospitals.

During 1951, 189,000 expectant mothers received care at prenatal clinics, about one-tenth more than in 1949. This type of service has been increasing steadily since the end of the war. Each woman attending these clinics in 1951 averaged 3 visits during that year. There was, however, a decline in postpartum medical care; 53,000 mothers were given medical examinations after delivery in 1951. Although this represented a small decrease from 1949 and 1950, it was well above the figure for any year prior to that.

Increases were reported in the number of children receiving medical services in 1951. Over 1,054,000 visits to well child clinics were made by 579,000 preschool children. This type of service showed a larger proportional increase than any of the other services reported. Over 402,000 infants received services at well child clinics, with close to 3 clinic visits per year on the average. The number of examinations of school children by physicians reached 2,413,000 in 1951.

Many more women were given nursing service both before and after delivery than in recent years, but less than 4,000 were given service at the time of

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1/ Services administered or supervised by State health agencies under the Social Security Act, title V, part 1.

2/ Throughout this discussion, all figures shown for 1951 include the newly reporting health departments. All statements of trend hold true, even when these additional health departments are excluded.

delivery, fewer than in any other year on record. Prenatal service was given to 268,000 women, who averaged  $2\frac{1}{2}$  nursing visits per year. Postpartum service reached a new high, with 281,000 mothers receiving an average of 2 nursing visits each after delivery.

Increases were also reported in public health nursing service for infants and preschool children, with 698,000 of the former and 730,000 of the latter receiving service through nursing visits. In both groups there was a considerable rise in the number of children seen between 1950 and 1951. The increase in the number of nursing visits, however, was not as great, resulting in a decrease in the average number of visits per infant and per preschool child. The number of nursing visits for school children, 2,178,000, was one-fourth lower for 1951 than it had been for 1950, at which time school nursing service had reached the highest volume in over a decade.

There were moderate increases in the number of persons immunized against smallpox and diphtheria from 1949 to 1951. In all, 1,850,000 smallpox immunizations and 1,838,000 diphtheria immunizations were given; in the latter case a peak level was reached for this type of service. The increase in immunization against diphtheria where age was reported (86% of all immunizations) was concentrated in children under the age of 5.

Inspections of school children by dentists and dental hygienists increased by one-tenth over the three-year period. There was, however, little change in the number of dental inspections for preschool children. In 1951, over 2,325,000 dental inspections of school children were reported, as well as over 80,000 for children of preschool age.

There was very little change from 1950 to 1951 in the number of visits made for supervision of midwives. Almost 32,000 such visits were made, 12 percent more than in 1949 and well above most of the post-war years.

Attached is a table presenting more detailed data on maternal and child health services administered or supervised by State health agencies, as reported to the Children's Bureau by States on Form MCH-51 for the years 1949-1951.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES<sup>1</sup>  
1949 - 1951

Type of service	Number reported		
	1949	1950	1951
<b>MEDICAL SERVICES</b>			
Maternity service			
Cases admitted to antepartum medical service.....	168,234	175,270	188,541
Visits by antepartum cases to medical conferences....	510,681	524,864	555,059
Cases given postpartum medical examination.....	55,915	59,485	52,543
Infant hygiene			
Individuals admitted to medical service.....	294,998	302,892	402,279
Visits to medical conferences.....	864,735	826,626	1,122,270
Preschool hygiene			
Individuals admitted to medical service.....	398,582	420,334	579,034
Visits to medical conferences.....	839,245	831,752	1,054,233
School hygiene			
Examinations by physicians.....	2,299,392	2,222,554	2,413,051
<b>PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICES</b>			
Maternity service			
Cases admitted to antepartum nursing service.....	242,115	258,367	268,488
Field and office visits to and by antepartum cases....	639,522	649,247	671,921
Cases given nursing service at delivery.....	6,154	4,881	3,903
Cases admitted to postpartum nursing service.....	242,932	246,223	280,586
Nursing visits to postpartum cases.....	506,159	509,468	574,024
Infant hygiene			
Individuals admitted to nursing service.....	552,489	536,815	697,704
Field and office nursing visits.....	1,539,869	1,546,454	1,723,055
Preschool hygiene			
Individuals admitted to nursing service.....	577,120	560,150	729,651
Field and office nursing visits.....	1,369,016	1,406,966	1,571,577
School hygiene			
Field and office nursing visits.....	2,672,085	2,893,616	2,177,511
<b>IMMUNIZATIONS</b>			
Smallpox.....	1,562,036	1,617,032	1,850,087
Diphtheria, total.....	1,556,440	1,556,580	1,838,417
Under 1 year.....	256,993	278,544	348,211
1-4 years.....	353,536	380,038	449,948
5 years and over.....	792,067	791,515	788,967
Age not reported.....	153,844	106,483	251,291
<b>DENTAL INSPECTIONS</b>			
Inspections by dentists or dental hygienists:			
Preschool children.....	75,978	72,468	80,160
School children.....	2,095,078	2,324,232	2,325,425
<b>MIDWIFE SUPERVISION</b>			
Visits for midwife supervision.....	28,456	31,935	31,904

<sup>1</sup>Services administered or supervised by the State health agencies under title V, part 1, of the Social Security Act, in the 48 States, Alaska, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Figures include all corrections received to date.

Note: Because of the inclusion of data for a number of large cities for the first time in 1951, figures for 1951 are not strictly comparable with those for earlier years.