

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES 1/
1951 - 1952

According to reports received from State agencies, several of the maternal and child health services provided during 1952 reached fewer mothers and children than they had in the previous year, indicating a shift from the general trend which had prevailed during the period following World War II. Levels were generally still high, however, for in most cases where service declined there were only slight drops from the peak levels reached in 1951. Among the more notable decreases were those in medical and nursing service for mothers, and in nursing service for infants. A number of other health services, however, continued on their upward course, especially medical service for infants and school children.

In 1952, 181,000 mothers attended prenatal clinics, 8,000 fewer than had done so in 1951, which had been the peak year for the provision of this type of service. As in earlier years, each woman receiving antepartum care averaged 3 clinic visits during 1952. Medical examinations after delivery were given to 55,000 mothers, a small increase over the number of such examinations provided in 1951.

Most medical services provided by State agencies to children reached their highest levels to date in 1952. Almost 436,000 infants, 8 percent more than in 1951, attended well-child clinics. The 1,243,000 visits made by these children represented an increase of one-tenth over the number of visits during the previous year. Clinic service was provided also for 578,000 children below school age, who averaged two visits each during 1952. Over 2,699,000 examinations of school children were made by physicians under the maternal and child health programs, more than had been made in any other year on record.

Decreases were more prevalent in public health services by nurses than in those provided by physicians. The numbers of nursing visits for mothers who received antepartum and postpartum nursing care both declined by 4 percent in 1952. In all, 258,000 women were given antepartum nursing service through 647,000 home and office visits, an average of two and a half visits each during the year. There was very little change in the number of women who received nursing service following delivery--283,000 in 1952. About 3,300 mothers received nursing service at the time of delivery. The decline of 14 percent from 1951 continues a long-range

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

downward trend in this type of service, concomitant with the increasing percentage of births taking place in hospitals.

There was a slight drop in the number of home and office nursing visits for infants and preschool children, but the number provided for school-aged children rose by 3 percent after a decline in 1951. Nursing service was given to 688,000 infants and 749,000 children below school age. In addition, there were 2,533,000 nursing visits provided to school children. Infants averaged about two and a half nursing visits each during the year, while preschool children averaged about two.

In 1952 there were further moderate increases in the number of persons immunized against smallpox and diphtheria; in the latter case more immunizations were provided under the State-Federal maternal and child health programs than in any other year since their inception. About 1,894,000 immunizations were reported against smallpox, and 1,717,000 against diphtheria. The increased effort to control diphtheria resulted in wider immunization among children of all age groups, but the greatest increase continued to be found among those under one year of age, as had been true in 1950 and 1951. Despite this trend, however, about half of the immunizations in the past two years were given to the 5 year and over age group.

Dental inspections by dentists or dental hygienists of preschool children increased by one-tenth in 1952, but there was a slight drop in the amount of this service provided to children of school age. In all, such inspections were provided for 88,000 preschool children, more than in any other year since 1938; they were given also to 2,472,000 school children, not far below the peak level for this type of service.

Since the beginning of the maternal and child health services program, there has been a slow but somewhat uneven downward trend in the number of health department visits made for the supervision of midwives. In 1952 there were 29,000 such visits made, about one-tenth less than in the previous year.

The attached table summarizes data on maternal and child health services administered or supervised by State health agencies for the years 1951 and 1952, as reported to the Children's Bureau by the States on Form MCH-51.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH SERVICES¹
1951 - 1952

Type of service	Number reported		Percentage change ²
	1952	1951	1952 from 1951
MEDICAL SERVICES			
Maternity service			
Cases admitted to antepartum medical service....	181,000	189,000	-4.0
Visits by antepartum cases to medical conferences.....	544,000	555,000	-2.0
Cases given postpartum medical examination.....	55,000	53,000	4.4
Infant hygiene			
Individuals admitted to medical service.....	436,000	402,000	8.3
Visits to medical conferences.....	1,243,000	1,122,000	10.8
Preschool hygiene			
Individuals admitted to medical service.....	578,000	580,000	-0.3
Visits to medical conferences.....	1,147,000	1,059,000	8.3
School hygiene			
Examinations by physicians.....	2,699,000	2,578,000	4.7
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING SERVICES			
Maternity service			
Cases admitted to antepartum nursing service....	258,000	268,000	-4.1
Field and office visits to and by antepartum cases.....	647,000	672,000	-3.8
Cases given nursing service at delivery.....	3,300	3,900	-14.3
Cases admitted to postpartum nursing service....	283,000	281,000	0.8
Nursing visits to postpartum cases.....	556,000	578,000	-3.9
Infant hygiene			
Individuals admitted to nursing service.....	688,000	698,000	-1.4
Field and office nursing visits.....	1,666,000	1,730,000	-3.7
Preschool hygiene			
Individuals admitted to nursing service.....	749,000	732,000	2.4
Field and office nursing visits.....	1,549,000	1,577,000	-1.8
School hygiene			
Field and office nursing visits.....	2,533,000	2,453,000	3.3
IMMUNIZATIONS			
Smallpox.....	1,894,000	1,850,000	2.4
Diphtheria, total.....	1,717,000	1,671,000	2.7
Under 1 year.....	376,000	348,000	8.0
1-4 years.....	466,000	450,000	3.6
5 years and over.....	815,000	789,000	3.3
Age not reported.....	60,000	84,000	-28.7
DENTAL INSPECTIONS			
Inspections by dentists or dental hygienists			
Preschool children.....	88,000	80,000	9.5
School children.....	2,472,000	2,592,000	-4.6
MIDWIFE SUPERVISION			
Visits for midwife supervision.....	29,000	32,000	-9.4

¹Services 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.

²Based on unrounded figures.