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e of Health Services

In Two Southern Pennsylvania Communities

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SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE
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Foreword

An advisory committee of professional and State government agencies working in the field of rural health was of great aid in planning and conducting this study. It consisted of representatives from the Pennsylvania State Dental Society, the Hospital Association of Pennsylvania, the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Tuberculosis Society, and the State Departments of Health, Public Assistance and Welfare.

This committee selected the two communities to be studied, choosing two of similar size, educational facilities, ethnic and religious stocks, income levels, and types of farming. One, Gettysburg, has a hospital and the other, Shippensburg, does not. Both have a fair supply of doctors. Neither is a distressed community in any way. The aim was to study the normal use of health services in the normal community.

The areas to be studied were determined by going out along the main roads from the community centers and asking the people where they obtained their medical service. At that point where as many seemed to use doctors located elsewhere as used those in the center, the boundary was drawn.

Within these boundaries the open country dwellings were grouped into clusters according to the road and stream pattern so as to be easily located by investigators. The clusters averaged 4 to 6 dwellings each. They were then numbered spirally outward from the center, and every fifth cluster was chosen for visit. The resultant selections seemed quite evenly distributed over the areas. Every house within the selected clusters was visited. If the occupants were absent, a second visit was made; and in the case of clusters where poor luck was encountered, a third.

In the case of small villages and closely built-up areas, every fifth house was chosen. If the occupants were not home on the first call or the call-back, the next house on its right was tried.

The information obtained was transferred to code-sheets and hand-counted due to the shortage of tabulation machinery, a factor which reduced the number of sorts possible. Copies of the schedule used will be sent upon request.

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