

REPORT OF THE BUREAU OF TUBERCULOSIS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH OF PORTO RICO

During the fiscal year 1924-1925 dispensaries have been opened in the following towns: Puerta de Tierra, July 1, 1924; Aguadilla, September 15, 1924; Juncos, September 29, 1924; Caguas, October 14, 1924; Mayagüez, February 16, 1925, and Guayama, February 8, 1925. In that period of time 13,492 consultations and 670 clinics have been held and 6,018 patients have been treated in the tuberculosis dispensaries of San Juan and the Island.

Eleven hundred and ninety-two cases of tuberculosis were referred to the Social Service Agency for investigation, financial help or hospitalization.

Of the 6,018 patients examined in the tuberculosis dispensaries, 1,812 were registered in the dispensaries of Santurce and Puerta de Tierra and 4,206 in the other dispensaries of the Island. Three thousand four hundred and sixty-two of the total number of patients treated were classified as clinically positive or suspicious, and of this number 2,013 presented definite signs of tuberculosis. Two thousand five hundred and sixty-six were classified as clinically negative.

Of the patients that attended the clinics 1,651 were men, 3,295 women and 1,072 children. Three thousand three hundred and sixty-nine were white, 1,338 mulattoes and 1,311 colored.

Out of the 2,013 cases classified as clinically positive there were 514 incipient, 600 moderately advanced and 599 advanced cases.

The 6,018 patients treated in the tuberculosis dispensaries are classified according to their occupations. (This table has been omitted.)

The average number of consultations for each patient during the fiscal year 1924-1925 in each of these dispensaries was as follows: San Juan, 14.17; Santurce, 3.37; Puerta de Tierra, 14.28; Caguas, 8.71; Aguadilla, 2.58; Juncos, 1.17; Guayama, 3.02; Mayagüez, 2; Ponce, 1.07.

There are thirteen nurses actually engaged in this Bureau and these are distributed as follows: San Juan, 2; Santurce, 2; Puerta de Tierra, 2; Aguadilla, 1; Mayagüez, 1; Ponce, 2; Guayama, 1; Juncos, 1; Caguas, 1. These nurses made 15,013 house visits during the past fiscal year, distributed as follows: San Juan, 1,936; Santurce, 2,568; Puerta de Tierra, 1,528; Ponce, 1,176; Caguas, 605; Juncos, 2,271; Aguadilla, 478; Mayagüez, 2,368; Guayama, 1,633.

Of the cases treated in the dispensaries 507 had a family history of tuberculosis and 136 of continuous promiscuity. Five hundred and fifty-eight of the patients who attended the dispensaries were suffering from other diseases, the most common being bronchitis.

Four hundred and forty-eight Von Pirquet tests were made on children under fourteen years of age with the following results: Positive, 228; Negative, 214.

The economic condition of the majority of the patients who attended the dispensaries was that of absolute poverty.

There was an average of 6.11 persons in each family studied. The average number of rooms in each home was 2.09 and the average monthly income was found to be \$27.87.

Three thousand four hundred and ninety-five patients were discharged from the tuberculosis dispensaries. These were classified as follows: Improved, 985; arrested, 492; transferred, 196; quiescent, 767; sent to the Insular Sanatorium, 26; sent to the hospital, 23; deceased, 275.

The staff of the Bureau gave conferences on tuberculosis and exhibited the film "Fighting the White Plague" in the following towns and cities of the Island: San Juan, Santurce, Mayagüez, Mayagüez Playa, Vega Baja, Guayama, Manatí, Jayuya, Utuado, Caguas, Bayamón, Coamo, Puerta de Tierra, Villalba, Ponce, Lares and San Germán.

Due to the cooperation of the Bureau of Tuberculosis of the Department of Health, the "Society for the Prevention of Tuberculosis in Children" established a Summer Camp at kilometer 23 on the road from Río Piedras to Caguas during the summer of 1924. This camp offered the advantages of an open-door life, pure air with wholesome and nutritious food to a number of poor girls, daughters of tubercular parents.

A large quantity of anti-tuberculosis literature was freely distributed and an intense propaganda of publicity was carried out through the newspapers. Such pamphlets as "Pure Air is the Best Tonic to be Had", "Defend Yourself and Defend Others from Tuberculosis" and "Some Advice about Tuberculosis" were printed and distributed free. The last-mentioned were published by permission of the Anti-tuberculosis League of Porto Rico, having been published by this organization originally in 1912.

Of the cases referred to the Social Service by the dispensaries of San Juan, Santurce and Puerta de Tierra for relief the reports of the Social Workers will give an idea of the work done by the agency in connection with the Bureau of Tuberculosis.

Family C., referred by Dr. R., February 10, 1924, for immediate help. Registered in the Tuberculosis Clinic No. 40, San Sebastián St., under the number 108. The family consists of the mother, twenty-eight years of age, colored, born in San Juan, and three children whose father died at the Insular Anti-tuberculosis Sanatorium. This family was found in a most destitute condition, without food and owing the rent of the room in which they lived. Discovering that the father had been a printer for a number of years in one of the daily newspaper shops, we visited the manager who pledged three dollars weekly for the family, and this amount has been used in the purchase of eggs and milk each day for the children. Thanks to this act of generosity the children have increased in weight and have a much healthier appearance.

R. V. was referred by Dr. S. on the 1st of April, 1924, as a clinically positive advanced case of pulmonary tuberculosis needing urgent help. Registered under No. 183. The patient is a young woman 18 years old, white, divorced, born in A. She lived in a friend's room, who is a laundress and who overhearing the patient's story one afternoon, allowed her to share the room and the frugal meals that she had. Discovering that R. V. had two brothers who were employed, we interviewed them and secured the promise of two dollars a week from one and five dollars a month from the other. This money has been spent in milk, eggs, oatmeal, flour, sugar, etc., for the patient. Besides, Mrs. A. de H. sent \$10 for this patient, and from the time she was reported until she left here for her native town we were able to render her unstinted aid.

J. P. was referred by Dr. M. on December 8, 1924, as a clinically positive advanced case of pulmonary tuberculosis. Registered under No. 687. This patient was 38 years of age, white, single, was born in S., where he had been employed as a bread deliverer. He lived with M. R., a mulatto 27 years old. They lived in very poor condition, some days having no food, and owing three months' house rent. Due to the poverty-stricken condition of the patient and the fact that he was spreading everywhere the disease from which he suffered, there was urgent necessity of having him admitted into a hospital. We convinced the patient that he should go to the Hospital for Contagious Diseases of San Juan and assured him that he would have the help of the Department of Health. We were successful in having him admitted and sent him a quart of milk and four eggs each day as well as sugar, oatmeal biscuits, etc., this being made possible by the assistance of Messrs. R. N. and J. B. This service was continued

until the patient died on December 20th, 1924, at the hospital. We recommended the case of the woman with whom he lived to the Red Cross for their consideration and help.

Of the cases treated in the Tuberculosis Dispensaries and visited by the nurses many received a great deal of assistance, and in order to demonstrate what was done a few of these cases are cited.

A. R., a dressmaker, white, insolvent, has two children, the younger of which is also a tuberculous patient registered at the San Juan Clinic. A. R. was admitted at the Tuberculosis Dispensary of San Juan on October 23, 1924, having the following symptoms: A cold, cough, bloody expectoration, fever, chills, night sweats and pain on the right side. She weight 82 pounds when admitted; pulse, 104; temperature, 36.2. Her diagnosis was advanced pulmonary tuberculosis. She was visited eighteen times in her home. She was supplied with medicine and her case was referred to the American Red Cross in order to obtain better nourishment for her. She was taught to sleep with the windows open, rest several hours a day, keep everything apart from the other members of the family and to live in a much more hygienic way. She has been supplied with an abundance of prophylactic material and has made 25 visits to the dispensary, during which time she has improved very much. The analysis of the sputum in the Biological Laboratory of the Department of Health gave the following result: October 29, 1924, negative; January 7, 1925, positive; August 9, 1925, negative. Her weight on August 30, 1925 was 86½ pounds and her condition at the present time is satisfactory.

C. C., domestic, female, mulatto, very poor, living with eight relatives, was admitted to the Tuberculosis Dispensary of San Juan on the 9th of October, 1924, with the following symptoms: Cough, expectoration, fever every day, chills night sweats and pain in the chest. She weighed 80½ pounds. Her diagnosis was advanced pulmonary tuberculosis. She was visited fourteen times in her home. At the present time she sleeps with the window open, and rests several hours a day and has been supplied with prophylactic material regularly. She has made thirty visits to the dispensary and the examination of the sputum at the Biological Laboratory has given the following results: October 22, 1924, negative; December 22, 1924, June 25, 1924, negative. Her last weight on August 27, 1925 was 90 pounds and she shows visible signs of improvement.

The new patients treated at the dispensaries during the fiscal year 1924-1925 are classified as follows:

Dispensaries	Sex (adults)		Age		Total
	Male	Female	Adults	Children	
Dispensary No. 1, San Juan.....	200	364	573	184	757
Dispensary No. 2, Santurce.....	175	469	644	205	849
Dispensary No. 3, Ponce.....	94	94	188	8	196
Dispensary No. 4, Puerta de Tierra....	30	106	136	70	206
Dispensary No. 5, Juncos.....	88	133	221	28	249
Dispensary No. 6, Aguadilla.....	38	179	217	92	309
Dispensary No. 7, Caguas.....	67	123	190	27	217
Dispensary No. 8, Mayagüez.....	37	105	142	28	170
Dispensary No. 9, Guayama.....	55	74	129	17	146
Total.....	793	1,647	2,440	659	3,099

Dispensaries	Race		Total
	White	Colored	
Dispensary No. 1, San Juan.....	381	376	757
Dispensary No. 2, Santurce.....	580	269	849
Dispensary No. 3, Ponce.....	134	62	196
Dispensary No. 4, Puerta de Tierra....	133	73	206
Dispensary No. 5, Juncos.....	224	25	249
Dispensary No. 6, Aguadilla.....	228	81	309
Dispensary No. 7, Caguas.....	136	81	217
Dispensary No. 8, Mayagüez.....	120	50	170
Dispensary No. 9, Guayama.....	80	66	146
Total.....	2,016	1,083	3,099

Dispensaries	Single	Married	Widowed or Divorced	Total
Dispensary No. 2, Santurce.....	499	350	849
Dispensary No. 3, Ponce.....	90	106	196
Dispensary No. 4, Puerta de Tierra....	129	65	12	206
Dispensary No. 5, Juncos.....	158	91	249
Dispensary No. 6, Aguadilla.....	173	110	26	309
Dispensary No. 7, Caguas.....	128	89	217
Dispensary No. 8, Mayagüez.....	91	63	16	170
Dispensary No. 9, Guayama.....	92	54	146
Total.....	1,859	1,136	104	3,099

* Only positive cases included.

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