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This leaflet was prepared jointly by the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Public Health Service of the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. It is one in a series designed to assist in the development of resources in rural areas through the more effective use of existing private and government services.

If you need additional copies, write to the State health department in your own State. Or write direct to the Publications Office of the Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

COMMITTEE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

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Resource ID 7966

Using Your Community's Health Resources

USING your COMMUNITY'S HEALTH RESOURCES



COMMITTEE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Rural Resource Leaflet No. 5

USING YOUR COMMUNITY'S HEALTH RESOURCES

One of the main objectives of a rural area development program is to improve the level of health in rural communities.

Here are a few examples of health improvement projects started in some communities --

-- Choctaw County, Oklahoma, voted a bond issue to help finance a 32-bed general hospital and health center.

-- Officials in Grainger County, Tennessee, appropriated \$14,400 for the county's share of a \$60,000 health center at Rutledge.

-- Funds are being raised in Price County, Wisconsin, for a new hospital.

-- In order to attract another physician the people of Twiggs County, Georgia, built a modern 9-room office and residence, offering free rent for six months.

-- In Raleigh, West Virginia, there has been additional emphasis on school lunch programs.

-- A county-wide health survey was made in Perry County, Indiana, using volunteer interviewers, under guidance of health department, and extension service workers.

Your community can undertake similar activities. Health services already available in many areas can be of vital assistance.

Using this leaflet as a guide, a rural planning group can check its own organized health resources. Services provided by agencies and organizations listed usually can be obtained whether or not they are located within the boundaries of your county.

A first step is to get acquainted with private medical groups such as doctors, dentists, and hospitals in your area. A logical second step is to learn more about the services offered by public and voluntary health organizations.



Your Public Health

The health department is the public agency charged with the responsibility of protecting and promoting the health of your entire community. Its personnel work with local doctors, dentists, farm organizations and other rural community groups to --

- Provide services protecting the community's health.
- Obtain facts about and plan for health improvement.
- Provide health education.
- Utilize health resources from outside the community when necessary.

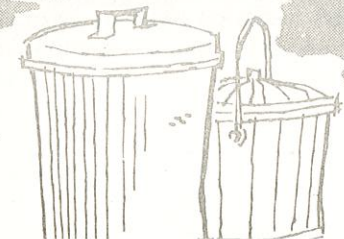
If there is no health department in your county, these services may be available from your district or State health department.

SANITATION

Public health engineers and sanitarians can help communities avoid stream and air pollution. They can also aid in developing sewage treatment systems. These projects are important in rural areas with new industrial enterprises.

Sanitarians and other public health officials also advise rural community groups and individual families on --

- Safeguarding water, milk and food supplies.
- Maintaining health standards in public places such as restaurants, tourist and trailer camps, 4-H camps, swimming pools.
- Controlling animal diseases such as tuberculosis, Bang's disease and trichinosis that can be passed on to people who come in contact with infected animals and animal products.



Health Department

- Planning and carrying out community safety campaigns.
- Planning and carrying out campaigns to get rid of rats and other pests.
- Promoting the "H" for "Health" in 4-H programs.

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

The public health nurse works with local doctors, school teachers, PTA members and others to help individuals, families and the community maintain good health. She counsels with expectant mothers and mothers of new babies. She works with doctors, parents, teachers, and school administrators in building a sound school health program.

Public health nurses can also help families gain a better understanding of their health problems.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Health department workers also join with local employers to reduce job accidents and illnesses. They cooperate with management and workers in setting up first aid courses, mass testing for early detection of tuberculosis and other diseases and programs to improve the nutrition and general health of workers.

VITAL STATISTICS

The health department records births, cases of certain diseases, and number and causes of death. This information can be used in developing a sound county program of health improvement.



OTHER HEALTH RESOURCES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

COUNTY WELFARE AGENCIES

County welfare agencies usually can assist needy persons who require the care of a doctor or hospital. Information on these agencies can be obtained from your county welfare director.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

These agencies help disabled men and women train for and find suitable employment. They --

-- Provide vocational rehabilitation services for disabled farmers or farm workers to help them regain farming skills.

-- Assist community development groups in making surveys to find out how many persons are disabled and the effect on family income.

CRIPPLED CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Diagnosis and treatment for crippled children may be provided through State health and welfare departments. However, some States have a separate crippled children's agency. The department or agency administering the program also can aid in locating crippled children.

VOLUNTARY AND PROFESSIONAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

American Cancer Society
National Tuberculosis Association
American Heart Association
American Red Cross
The National Foundation
American Medical Association
American Dental Association

and many other private agencies conduct programs of health education and research,....provide diagnostic facilities for special types of illness and disability,.... assist in community planning,....and have many other services. Information about these services can be obtained from the local or State chapter of the agency or from its national headquarters.

COMMUNITY AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

Some of these groups provide services or help to finance them for people with special needs. They conduct health education programs. They sponsor community surveys and other special projects. Among rural community groups with health interests are:

- Parent Teachers Associations
- Women's Clubs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Service Clubs
- Lodges
- Home Demonstration Clubs
- 4-H Clubs
- Farm Organizations

SUGGESTED FURTHER STEPS IN YOUR HEALTH PROGRAM --

-- Study and discussion of information provided by local, State and national health organizations. The American Public Health Association, 1790 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y., for example, can provide a detailed community health study guide.

-- Meetings with local hospital administrators, doctors, dentists, and others, including:

- Rural health chairman of State medical society
- Vocational rehabilitation counselor
- Welfare department director
- Health officer, nurses, health educator, and others from the health department (local or State)
- Representatives of voluntary health insurance organizations, industrial health programs and other health organizations.

-- Tours of nearby hospitals and outpatient departments, welfare and health departments.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS IN OUR COMMUNITY CAN HELP IN PROJECTS SUCH AS THESE:

1. Taking inventory of community health resources.
2. Preparing a pamphlet for local use showing what health services are available and how they may be obtained.
3. Conducting group discussion to help people learn more about good health practices.
4. Surveying local families to find out how many could be aided by vocational rehabilitation or crippled children's services.
5. Interviewing families on farms and in towns to see how many know about and use services of the health department.
6. Developing health career programs. Your community can help to meet crucial shortages in health personnel by assisting young people in choosing and preparing for a career in health work.
7. Enrolling people in voluntary health insurance group.
8. Improving farm and home safety, including accident prevention campaigns.

"HOW WELL WE ACHIEVE THE AIM OF IMPROVED RURAL HEALTH DEPENDS, VERY SIMPLY, ON HOW WELL WE LEARN TO WORK TOGETHER."

Leroy E. Burney, M.D.
Surgeon General
U. S. Public Health Service

The U. S. Department of Agriculture and other departments and agencies of the Federal Government have joined with the States to make balanced farm, industry, and community development in underdeveloped rural areas a principal objective of national policy. To implement this policy, the Rural Development Program has been started on a pilot basis in 62 counties and 9 trade areas in 31 States.