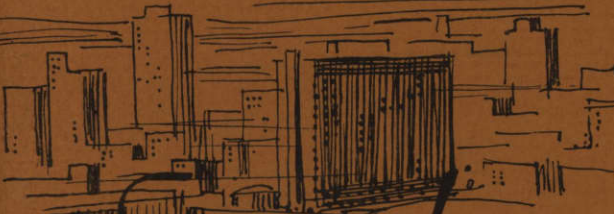


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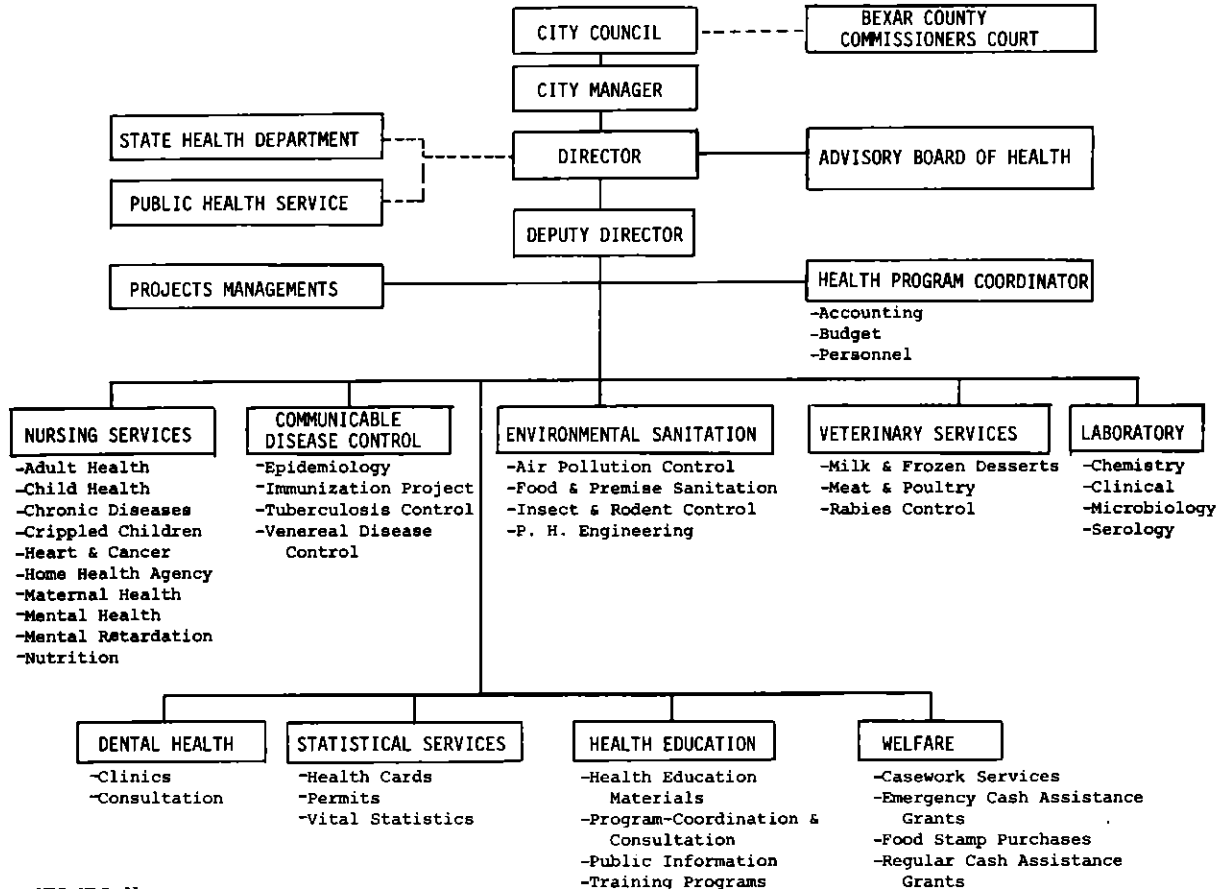
**METROPOLITAN  
HEALTH  
DISTRICT**





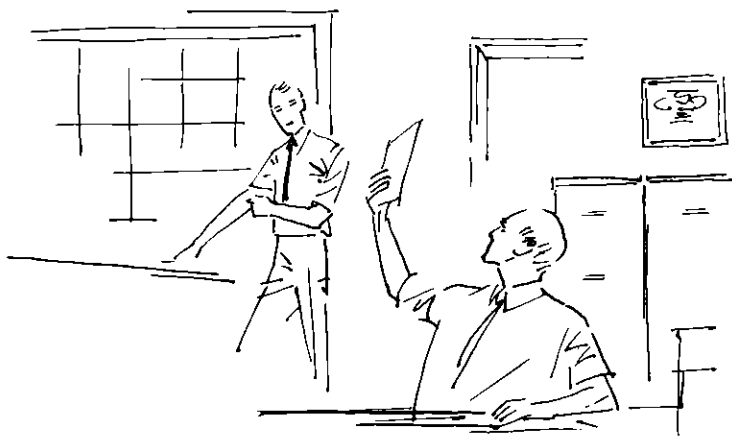
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SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN HEALTH DISTRICT



## INTRODUCTION

Present day public health concepts place emphasis on health goals offering greatest hope of attainment. These goals include control of upper respiratory and intestinal diseases, chronic conditions such as cancer, heart, circulatory diseases, accidents and other incapacitating conditions. Improved maternal and child health, industrial and mental hygiene and many other health problems are within these goals. The San Antonio Metropolitan Health District is especially geared to bring these goals to fruition.



## ADMINISTRATION

The Director and his administrative staff personnel are responsible for: budgeting, spending, personnel management, approving and establishing policies, and following through with recommended procedures that bind the nine divisions into a single functional cohesive health district.



## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL

This Division is responsible for the surveillance of communicable disease within the boundaries of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District. The principle functions of the Division are Epidemiology and control measures through treatment or prevention in four main fields.

Services in the field of Tuberculosis control are provided by the Chest Clinic, the Case Register and the child centered case finding approach. The Chest Clinic is the focal point for diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis suspects and contacts referred by other clinics of the District and private physicians or located through case finding efforts. The Tuberculosis Case Register of all known or suspect cases in Bexar County assists in control measures and supplies statistical data. The case-finding phase includes the skin testing of approximately 36,000 school children (first and seventh grades) annually with follow up on positive reactors.

Venereal Disease control is accomplished through early detection and treatment of infectious cases and contacts. A diagnostic and treatment center is operated daily as is an active epidemiological program for every case of infectious syphilis. Gonorrhea, with its low morbidity and mortality is not followed as closely as is syphilis. Close liaison is maintained with private physicians and laboratories as well as with other agencies interested in the control of venereal disease.

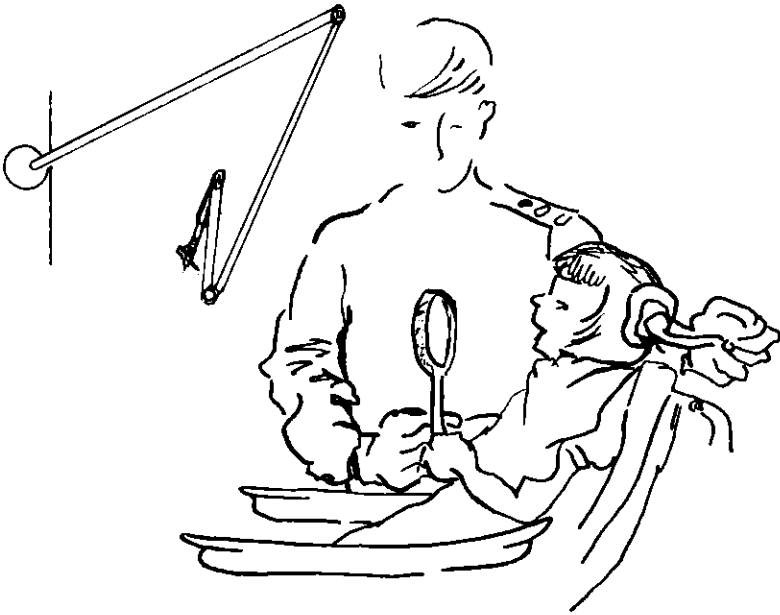


The Health District has a vigorous immunization program with a daily Immunization Clinic operated in the District office as well as neighborhood clinics in lower socioeconomic areas. Immunizations are also available in all Well Child Conferences run by Nursing Services. Free immunizing agents are provided to private physicians for immunization of patients unable to afford such agents.

A Hansen's Disease Clinic is operated under the supervision of a dermatologist for the diagnosis and treatment of this disease which is endemic in South Texas. Extensive epidemiological work is carried on in cooperation with the Texas State Department of Health program.

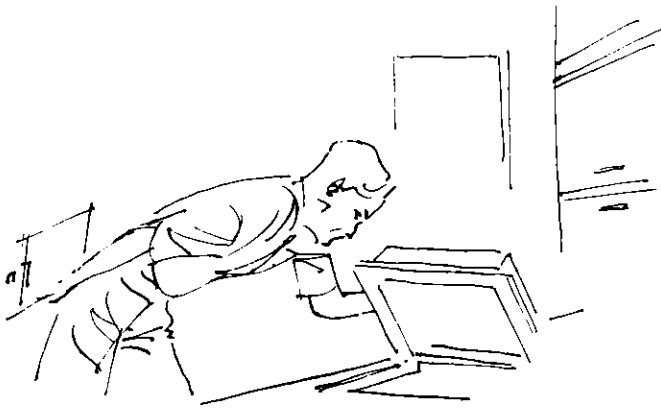
Consultative services are provided physicians in the field of communicable disease control including prevention of rabies in humans.





## DENTAL HEALTH

The Dental Health Program is designed to effect improvement in the dental health of the community by providing clinical facilities for chair-side health education, and the application of preventive treatment procedures for indigent children through twelve years of age, and furnishing dental health educational materials; such as, films, literature, and charts for individuals or groups to help maintain it. Also included are corrective treatment procedures for indigent children through twelve years of age designed to eliminate and prevent oral diseases and infections, and to prevent the loss of teeth and the subsequent dental disorders caused by their loss.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION

The Environmental Sanitation Division helps provide the community with a healthful environment in which to live and work. This is accomplished by surveillance and inspection techniques used to evaluate the adverse health influences of our society. After needs have been established, proper levels of control and correction are set forth according to current acceptable state and local health practices and requirements. The area of work covered by the Environmental Sanitation Division is varied and includes inspection of private premises and food establishments, insect and rodent control, public health engineering and air pollution.

### Premise Sanitation

Inspections of private premises are made to locate and correct health hazards and nuisances. Included in these inspections are sewer and water connections, fly and mosquito breeding, harborage, garbage storage, rubbish, trash and weeds.

### Food Sanitation

The Food Sanitation Section has supervision over the physical plant and sanitary operation of food establishments. This includes the processing, manufacturing, storage, preparation and service of food intended for human consumption in retail and wholesale trade. Advice is given on proper equipment to be used, methods of cleaning, storing, preparing and serving of food products, and construction and maintenance of establishments.

## **Insect and Rodent Control**

Activities of the Insect and Rodent Control Section include control of mosquitoes, flies, roaches and rats on public property.

Mosquitoes are controlled by draining, stocking with minnows or spraying standing water in rivers, creeks, ditches and other places where water collects and presents a mosquito-breeding area. Other work of this section includes destruction of rats, rat fleas, flies and roaches to prevent those diseases transmitted by them. Control is accomplished by eliminating breeding sites where possible, or instigating control measures where sites cannot be eliminated.

## **Engineering Section**

Responsibilities of the Engineering Section include water quality control, liquid waste disposal, institutional health, occupational health, rendering plants and mobile home parks.

Routine sanitary surveys for detection of pollution hazards are made of water supplies including swimming pools. Samples are collected for bacteriological and chemical analysis to determine if the water quality is safe.

Supervision of septic tank system installations and operational problems, where no sewers are available, and the operation of sewage treatment plants to minimize water pollution are other concerns of this section. Special problems regarding sewer overflows, broken sewer mains, mis-use of the sewage system (oil, acid wastes, grease, etc.), and liquid waste disposal for new subdivisions are also activities of the Engineering Section.

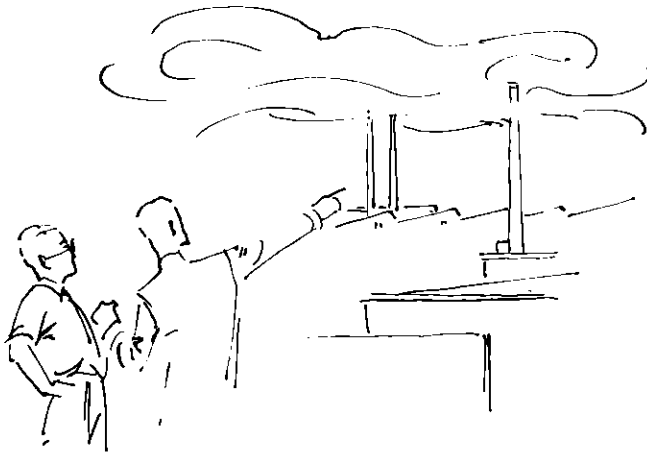
This section also surveys industrial establishments to detect occupational hazards (dusts, fumes, mists, toxic chemicals, radiation exposures, etc.), and their control.

Rendering plants are placed under Engineering Section personnel who work with management in bringing the physical plants up to a standard assuring sanitary operation. Operation of the plants, as well as the vehicles used to collect materials to be rendered, is also included.

Mobile home parks inspections for water supply, swimming pools, liquid and solid waste disposal are also conducted by the Engineering Section.

### Air Pollution

The Air Pollution Control Program has the function of sampling ambient air, locating air pollution emissions, and controlling discharges into the outdoor atmosphere of contaminants which are injurious to humans, plants, animals or property, or which interfere with enjoyment of life and property.

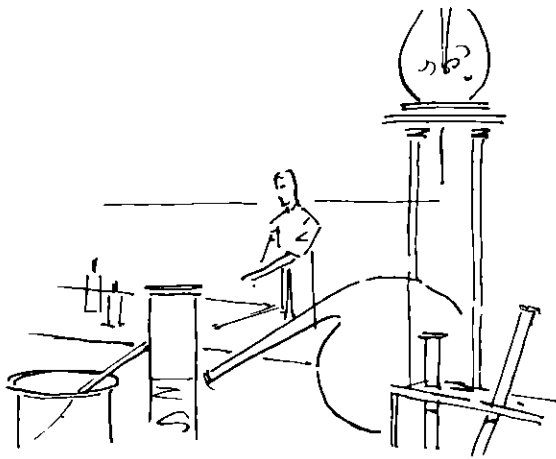




## HEALTH EDUCATION

The function of this Division is to inform citizens on matters concerning health and related problems. Knowledge in the application of an "ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is the theme of the Health Educator. To accomplish this, each citizen should realize his responsibility to his loved ones, friends and neighbors. Disease epidemics flourish where people are careless about immunizations, sanitation and personal hygiene. Therefore, it becomes the health educator's responsibility to conduct TV and radio programs, give lectures, show films, distribute pamphlets, write news releases, work with community groups and health organizations, and inform citizens of the importance of a health environment. This division works closely with other divisions assisting them with educational needs to help accomplish their purpose.

In cooperation with San Antonio College this Division offers various training courses to the local food industry. These courses are designed to acquaint the food handler with methods of food-borne disease prevention.

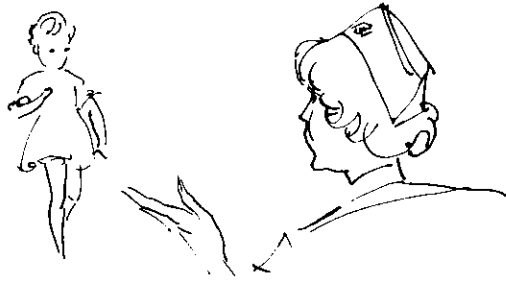


## LABORATORY

As a Regional Laboratory of the Texas State Department of Health this Laboratory serves not only San Antonio and Bexar County but twenty surrounding counties and the Cities in these counties. However, approximately 90% of the samples and specimens received are from San Antonio.

Laboratory activities are essentially those which implement departmental objectives in communicable disease control. In addition to isolation and identification of pathogens, the laboratory is called upon to perform tests on samples of food, milk and water, and on swabs and rinses on utensils, equipment and containers to insure that clean wholesome food and drinks reach the consumer. The chemistry section has been expanded recently to include the laboratory tests needed for air pollutants and the amounts of each present in the air and to determine effectiveness of control measures.

Along with the great emphasis placed on epidemiology and diagnosis of communicable disease (tuberculosis, venereal diseases, diphtheria, etc.) and the quality control testing of food, water and air there is an increased demand for clinical testing to be done on the medically indigent for early detection of chronic diseases. To the present, in this laboratory, this work has been pointed primarily to blood deficiencies, heart conditions and diabetes.



## PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

The primary goal of Public Health Nursing is the provision of nursing services that promote and make possible the achievement and maintenance of optimal health for all people in a community. It is one of the basic organized community health services which contributes to a healthy and happy way of life.

Public Health Nursing services may be directed to an individual or a family, either at home, at school, at work, or in a public health center. The public health nurse is known throughout the community and her services are available without distinction to race, color, creed, economic, educational, or social level.

In the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District public health nurses are involved in the operation of the following clinics involving health teaching for the family: Well-Child, Maternity and Adult Health Conferences, Immunization Clinics, Leprosy Clinics, Venereal Disease Clinics and Chest Clinics.

Home visitation is the core of public health nursing. This service includes visits in the interest of Crippled Children, Premature Infants, Preschool and School Age Children, Prenatal Care and any Chronic Illness, which includes those related to diabetes, cancer, cardiovascular and communicable diseases.



Two nutritionists are available for counseling with patients at the request of the individual or referrals from other sources. A comprehensive Nutrition Program has been established for the Model Neighborhood Area.

The Nursing Services is also certified as a Home Health Agency for Medicare. Services through Medicaid are also provided. Registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses and home health aides are employed to provide bedside care in the home.





## STATISTICAL SERVICES

The Statistical Services Division maintains about 600,000 birth records and 300,000 death records dating back to 1873. The responsibility for recording all births and deaths occurring in Bexar County was given the division on January 1, 1968. Approximately 18,000 births and 6,000 deaths are recorded each year.

Also, we handle the administrative transactions and money to issue licenses or permits for food establishments, food handlers, milk producers and distributors, ice cream and frozen desserts, trailer courts, rendering establishments, massage parlors, livestock, slaughterhouses, meat processors, poultry inspections, percolations tests, septic tank inspections, dog licenses. These actions produce about \$500,000 annually.

In addition, the division prepares statistical data regarding births, deaths, and compiles statistical records concerning communicable diseases and departmental activities. These statistics provide the Director with information about the status of health in the community. They also provide an aid to the evaluation of health programs, need for additional immunizations, and an index of the sanitary status of the community.



## **VETERINARY SERVICES**

The Division of Veterinary Services functions in areas involving animals and their relationship to the well-being of humans. The Division is composed of three sections, i.e., Milk and Frozen Desserts Inspection, Meat, and Rabies Control. A veterinarian is employed and available for professional consultation with employees on problems peculiar to animals and their health. The wholesomeness of the large volume of food products of animal origin is a responsibility of this Division.

### **Milk and Frozen Desserts Inspection**

This section performs inspections of dairy farms and milk and ice cream plants, and obtains samples for laboratory examination from each of these sources. The effective combination of these efforts assures citizens of San Antonio a safe, wholesome supply of milk and dairy products. Particular attention is given to the sanitation and function of equipment and surroundings utilized in the production, storage, hauling and manufacture of dairy products as well as to the health of the cows producing the milk. Complaints received by the section are discussed with the individuals involved and correction affected.

### **Rabies Control**

The control of the disease rabies is the chief function of this section. This is accomplished by placing biting dogs under observation for ten days from the date of bite, picking up sick, injured and unwanted

dogs, reducing the number of strays, and obtaining vaccination-licensure of owned dogs.

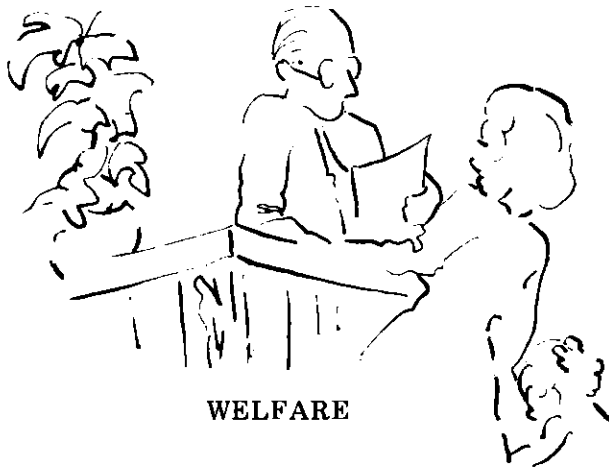
If a biting animal dies while confined, the brain is removed and forwarded to the laboratory for examination for rabies. The outcome of the confinement and laboratory tests are forwarded to medical personnel and are relayed to the victim and animal owners.

Unwanted dogs may be taken to the City Rabies Control Facility in Brackenridge Park for humane disposition.

The City Rabies Control Facility is operated by this section. Here owners may reclaim lost dogs upon showing some evidence of ownership. Unlicensed and unvaccinated animals must be vaccinated and licensed before being released from the shelter. Problems involving dogs may be discussed with the shelter personnel.

### Meat Section

The meat section is charged with the surveillance of the meat sold in San Antonio. It is the section's responsibility to assure the citizens a wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled meat supply. Surveillance is maintained on all meat wholesalers to assure that meat is from an approved source and is handled in a sanitary manner. All equipment and facilities of meat retailers, transporters, and meat storage facilities are checked to assure that they are maintained in a sanitary condition, and that the meat is handled in such a manner that prevents contamination. This activity can remove from consumer channels products found to be adulterated, contaminated and mislabeled.



### Public Assistance

The City Division of Public Welfare provides cash assistance grants for needy families or individuals provided the individual is unemployable, and provided no adult member of the immediate family is employable, unless illness of another member of the family requires their physical presence in the home for care. The unemployability must be based on the diagnosis and prognosis of a physician legally licensed to practice medicine in the State of Texas or employed by the U. S. Veterans Administration or Armed Forces. The physical incapacity must exist for a period of thirty days or longer.

Emergency cash assistance grants are made as follows:

1. The family must have an Aid for Families with Dependent Children (A.F.D.C.) application pending, or
2. The breadwinner is incarcerated, waiting sentence, or sentenced for less than six months, or
3. The breadwinner is deceased and Social Security is pending.

### Food Stamp Purchases

By reason of the State-City-County contract, the Department may purchase Food Stamps only for those individuals or families without income.





