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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS USPS 324-990 ISSN 0033-3549

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Address correspondence to:

Editor, Public Health Reports Parklawn Building, Room 13C-26 5600 Fishers Lane Rockville, MD 20857 (301) 443-0762



Interior of a mobile dental clinic serving American Indians circa 1934. Photo courtesy of the Indian Health Service

areas of expertise would build on the foundation of service laid during dentistry's first decades within PHS. For example, Dr. H. Trendley Dean, Dr. John Knutson, and others at the new National Institute of Health used early studies of mottled enamel to develop a theory that linked

fluoridated water with protection against dental caries. Community studies of the efficacy of fluoridated drinking water supplies, conducted during the 1940s and 1950s. and the creation of the National Institute of Dental Research in 1948 have enabled PHS dentists to use research to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of clinical care, both for beneficiaries and for the general public. Evidence of the success of water fluoridation is reflected in recent studies that indicate a one-third decline in dental caries among school children during the 1970s, followed by a second decline of one-third during the 1980s.

In the direct provision of care, the Dental Corps tradition of service has flourished. Although the PHS hospital system was dismantled in 1981, the Corps has maintained a vigorous presence in the U.S. Coast Guard and in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Delivery of clinical care has increased markedly with the establishment of the Indian Health Service in 1955, the advent of Great Society programs such as Project Head Start, and the creation of the National Health Service Corps in 1971.

In the 1990s, the early years of the Dental Corps continue to shape opportunities for growth and renewal. Dental policy has been advanced through collaborations across the full range of PHS programs, with dental health professionals serving as advisors, researchers, administrators, and deliverers of care. The successes of technological measures such as water fluoridation are historical lessons that are being applied to new challenges as PHS dentists prepare recommendations for health care reform plans.

-LYNNE PAGE SNYDER, PhD Candidate, Office of the PHS Historian

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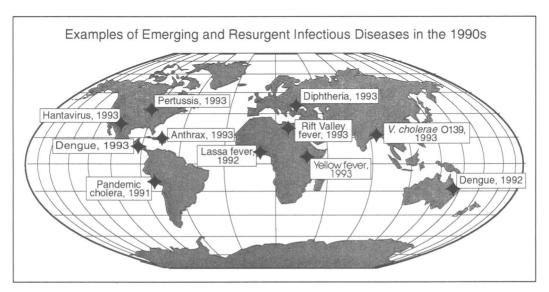
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Issues Plan to Address Emerging Infectious Diseases

The spectrum of infectious disease is changing rapidly in conjunction with dramatic changes in society and environment. Despite historical predictions to the contrary, people remain vulnerable to a wide array of new and resurgent diseases. These diseases pose a threat that requires improvement of the public health infrastructure at the local, State, and Federal levels and recognition that the health

to them effectively. It will serve as a guide for CDC's work in collaboration with its partners in safeguarding the nation from the threat of emerging infectious diseases.

The plan has four primary goals -

1. surveillance to detect, rapidly investigate, and monitor emerging pathogens.



of the American people is linked to the health of people in other nations. Infectious diseases can and do spread rapidly around the globe (see map), and global surveillance for emerging infections is vital to public health.

In partnership with local and State public health officials, other Federal agencies, medical and public health professional associations, infectious disease experts from academia and clinical practice, and international and public service organizations, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has published "Addressing Emerging Infectious Disease Threats: A Prevention Strategy for the United States," a 46-page booklet containing the CDC plan that addresses the urgent need to improve the nation's ability to identify infectious disease threats and to respond

the diseases that they cause, and the factors influencing their reemergence;

- 2. applied research to integrate laboratory science and epidemiology to optimize public health practice;
- 3. prevention and control to enhance communication of public health information about emerging diseases and ensure prompt implementation of prevention strategies; and
- 4. strengthened infrastructure among local, State, and Federal public health providers to support surveillance and implement prevention and control programs.

A copy of the plan may be obtained from CDC, National Center for Infectious Diseases, Office of Planning and Health Communication-EP, MS C14, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA 30333.

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