

MARSHALL ISLANDS MINISTRY OF HEALTH SERVICES



EJMOUR

Ebed Ilo Lubiden Beim

A Newsletter of Primary Health Care Action in the Marshall Islands

Number One -- May, 1987

Keeping Our Children Healthy

National Health Month Puts Spotlight on Primary Health Care Action

The Marshall Islands Cabinet declared April as National Health Month, and the year 1987 as the Year of the Child. With over 50% of the population under 14 years of age, it has brought a timely focus on youth and the need for more aggressive primary health campaigns in the community.

In joining nations around the world for the World Health Organization-sponsored events, the Cabinet observed that "hundreds of Marshallese children are suffering each year from malnutrition, diarrhea, immunizable diseases and preventable birth defects."

See Health Month...page 2



Children under 14 make up 50% of the Marshalls' population.

This Newsletter

The name of our newsletter is our motto: *Ejmour Ebed Ilo Lubiden Beim* ("Health Is In Your Hands"). The offices of Health Education, Family Planning and Continuing Education for Primary Health Workers believe that everyone in the community must work together to make a healthy society. Our goal of "health for all" will be reached by promoting primary health care -- which means taking health into the community. This newsletter will report on primary health actions in the Marshall Islands.

News Pepa In

Etan pepa in ej: *Ejmour Ebed Ilo Lubiden Beim*. Office ko an Health Education, Family Planning im Continuing Education, rar koba iben dron kin tomak eo aer ke ñe kejwoj jimor koba iben dron im jermal iben dron ilo Majol jenaj wawa ion juon jukjuk-im-bed eo ereo, aibojwoj, ekamōnōnō im elaptata bolemen ñan ar woj joke ie. Jibadbad im kotabar an pepa in ej lewoj melele kein im konan kaki ñon kejwoj aolep ion Majol in. Pepa in ej jibañ lewoj melele ko kin makitkit ko rej walok ilo ra eo an Ejmour im wawein bobrae nañinmij kein rej walok ion Majol in.

EJMOUR MOKTATA

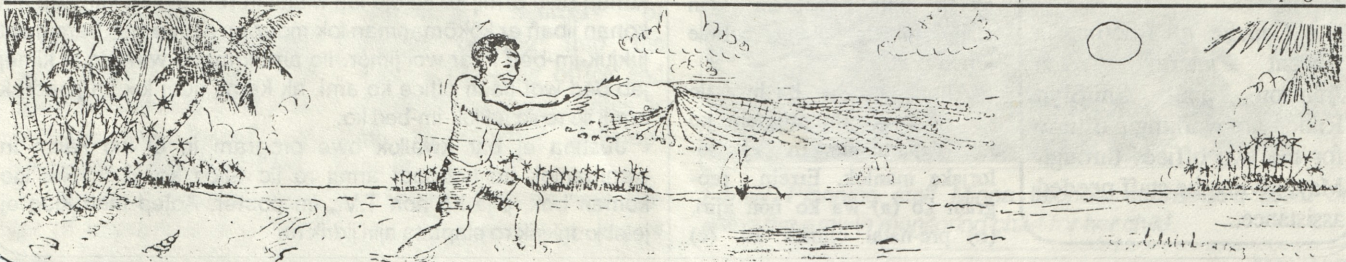
Secretary eo an Health Services, Marie Maddison, ej kwalok bwe armij kio rej jino lolorjake ejmour eo aer. Ej bar wanmanlok im



Marie Maddison

kwalok ke ilo kar jino in yea eo 1987 ekar lukkun kaburomijmij ejmour eo an ajiri in Likiep. Bōtab report ko im rej kap itok rej kwalok bwe 80% in ajiri ro kio ej kwalok bwe eman im kajur lok enbwinier. Ej bar ba bwe ajiri rein dredro lok. Ilo aer edro lok ej kwalok bwe edrik lok mejen jabwe ñn ibeir. Wallok kein ej juon menin utij buro ñon kejwoj jimor ilo Majol in.

Wawein kein rej walok jen emman in jikin takto ko an
Lale page 2



Health Month Puts Focus on Primary Health Care

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The Cabinet resolution added that "the high infant mortality rate in the Marshall Islands is indicative of not only poor health status of infants, but also...of overall child and adult health."

The declaration emphasized the effectiveness of im-

munizations, growth monitoring, breastfeeding and oral rehydration to prevent disease in children.

Justina Langidrik, Health Education director and chairperson of the Health Education Council, coordinating Health Month, said there is a change in people's attitudes: "The exciting thing is that people want to learn and take care of their health." Of the regular public health fairs and programs in island schools, she said: "We want to be visible. That's why we go out instead of staying in our offices."

The HEC is planning outreach health education programs to continue throughout the year.

"Health month activities were just a start," she said. Health educators are emphasizing outreach to the

outer islands, and producing new video films, posters and printed materials, especially aimed at young people.

Health Briefs

- **Family Planning's** Thursday afternoon clinic for men and women has begun to overflow with clients. The clinic, staffed by Dr. Jan Riemers and nurses Helen Jetnil and Minna Michael, offers pap tests, physical examinations, pregnancy tests, counselling, and a variety of birth control methods...

- A group of new health assistant candidates have just begun an 18 month training to prepare them for duty on the many outer island dispensaries. Alex Keju, director of Continuing Education for Primary Health Workers, is leading the program...

- **Requests for** health information are increasing, especially from Health Assistants and Traditional Birth Attendants on the outer islands. Family Health Project (Family Planning) and Health Education have been supplying packets of posters, flyers and booklets on smoking hazards, STDs, nutrition, etc., in Marshallese and English to the outer islands and Majuro businesses...

- **College of Micronesia** student interns Wida Johnson and Shirolyn Riklon are working parttime for the two offices through May, giving the staff needed assistance...



Health fairs in the community and Majuro schools took the National Health Month message out to thousands of people.

Kōttobar Eo In Ejmour Moktata

Jen Page 1

an ajiri, bareinwot elab lok an armij bōk melele ko rejel et ejmour.

Ej bar kwalok bwe elap lok an armij itok limoir ilo aer bōk konair ilo program ko an Family Planning im clinic ko jet an ejmour.

Jibadbad im kotobar eo ekaal an ra eo an Ejmour ilo terein ej kokmanmanlok ejmour ilo wawein ko ñon bobrae nañinmij. Juon ian oktak ko ej Asst. Secretary eo ekaal ñon bok eddo in bobrae (preventive) jabdre-wot nañinmij mokta jen aer walok ak edrok lok. Assistant Secretary in an Preventive Services, Jan Alfred, ear director ñon Family Planning Program.

Alfred ej kwalok ke elab an lōñ ajiri rej mej ilo ejelok unin. Program kein elap tokjeir ñan bobrae jorren kein.

Alfred ear bar ba bwe ilo yio in ewor jilu program ko im department in ej lorjake manlok. Errein program ko (a) wa ko ñon ajiri, (b) pre-natal clinics ko, (c)

eddōk lok an juon ajiri ak bobrae nañinmij in jawbe ñon.

Alfred ej kwalok ke rej kajoñ in kamane juon jukjuk-imbed eo im ebolōmen kin jikin nañinmij ko, dren in idak, ekatōk kin ejmour, aikuj ko an juon baamle bobrae nañinmij in jabwe ñon, im aikuj ko an juon ajiri ñon ejmour. Alfred ej lo bwe

ekanuj in lap tokjen bwe armij ren bok ijoko konair ilo wawein kein. Alfred ear bar ba bwe program kein rej itotak im kwalok aorok in men kein ñon juon jukjuk-imbed elaptata ñon juon baamle.

Secretary Maddison ej kwalok an errā ilo wawein in Alfred ej kwalok.

Ejmour An Juon Ajiri

Cabinet eo ak Nitijela emoj an kile ke alōñ in April, im yio in 1987 ej kokmanmanlok Ejmour an Ajiri ro nejid. Kinke 50% in armij in Majol in ej ajiri im 14 aer yio im drik lok. Jej aikuj in lukuun kōjbarok ajiri rein jen nañinmij in bidodo, jabwe ñon im nañinmij ko jet im ekka aer walok iben ajiri.

Director eo an Health Education Justina Langidrik, ej ba bwe armij kio eitok limo in aer lorjake make mour ko aer. Kin an armij konan ekatōk im lorjake ejmour ko aer ej juon menin utiej boro.

Ijelokin program ko an health im ekka aer koman, kim konan bwe armij ko kajojo ion Majol in ren jela ke kim kea, im konan jibañ er kōkōmanman lok mour an juon armij, bareinwot jukjuk-im-bed in ar woj jimor. Ilo am komane wawein in kimej jab bed wot iloan office ko ami, ak kemij duoj lok im jibadrok armij ilo ro ilo jukjuk-im-bed ko.

Justina ej bar kwalok bwe program in ej kio kajoñ in wonmanlok im kottabar armij ro ilo ailōñ ko ilikin. Rej kio koman bok, pija ko ñon T.V., im poster. Aolep men kien ej jelet jodrikrik ro elaptata ajiri jidrik ro.

Taking the Primary Health Message into the Community

The government's declaration of April as National Health Month gave a boost to primary health care programs, helping to stimulate ongoing outreach activities.

A series of health promotion programs, coordinated by the Health Education Council, took health screening and education into the community. The programs were the combined efforts of Health Services and other agencies, and put a particular emphasis on young people.

- **Downtown Parade:** Health Month opened April 7 with eye catching floats parading through downtown, showing health workers and youth in action: Marshall Islands High School students carried a huge banner, "Local Foods Best By Far", and complemented their float with a lively rendition of the song "One Banana"; and nursing students and hospital nursing staff were busy treating "patients" and showing CPR

Bar Juon Jikin Bobrae Nañinmij

Dri-gerbal ro ilo jikin Ejmour eo ilo office eo an Family Planning im Health Education rej kariwainene aolep armij bwe elañe ewōr aikuj ak kajitōk jab aliklik in jede lok ñon office eo an Preventive Health Center ilo Hospital eo emor. Ewor ruo nurse im jilu health educator ñon aer uake kajitōk ak aikuj ko ikijien wawein bobrae nañinmij in syphilis, moña ko rekar ñon enbwin juon ajiri, im men ko eirlokier. Office kein rej bar kaman kakōlkōl ko ñon eloñ kain nañinmij ko rekaawatata bareinwot nañinmij in cancer ko rej walok ñan kora.

Aolep Thursday alikin ralep ewor juon kora in taktō ej bed ilo office in ñon an koman kakōlkōl ko. Nurse im health educator ro rej jermal iben takto eo nan ukok kajitok ko ami.

Ilo objin in an Family Planning ej bar koman jet wawein ko ñan dri-nañinmij ro aer elañe juon dri-nañinmij ebok juon nañinmij eo elab lok inem dri-gerbal rein ilo Family Planning renaj etal iben dri-nañinmij in ñan hospital eo ekel im bukot takto ekkar be dri-nañinmij eo an loe.

Office in ebar bojak in koman kokōlkōl in bororo ñon kora ro kajojo. Men eo elaptata im aorok tata ilo office in ej, ñe ewor juon am nañinmij ejelok enaj jela kake ak kwe wot im armij eo ak takto eo kwar kakōlkōl iben.

Office kein ejab an kora wot ak bar emaan. Ñe eloñ kajitok ikijien bobrae nañinmij in syphilis, ak kajitok in ejmour, komij riwainene in itok kin kajitok ko ami. Office in ej bar lelōk kein bobrae biroro ko kin ejelok wonair. Ilo office in an family planning kom maroñ ebok ami poster ko ak pepa ko im rej kwallok kin family planning, nañinmij in AIDs, STDs, wawein bobrae nañinmij in jabwe ñon ñon ajiri ro nejid, im kab jorren ko im rej wallok jen kobatbat jika. Men kein kemij lewoj kin ejelok wonair. Bōjrak im lotok kim ilo office in an Preventive Health Center ilo hospital eo emor, ak telephone tok ilo numba ne 3326 ak 3315.

techniques.

- **Health Fairs:** Booths, displays, traditional medicine demonstrations, blood pressure testing, Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) counselling and other activities were all part of health fairs put on in downtown

Majuro, at all Majuro and Laura public elementary schools. The health fairs will continue through 1987.

- **Prenatal Education:** Many expectant mothers visit the Public Health prenatal clinic at the new hospital each week. During

Health Month, Public Health staff showed health education films on pregnancy, birth control, hazards of smoking to pregnant women and other primary health care issues to the women waiting for services at the clinic.

- **CPR:** Mercy hospital staff began an ongoing in-service cardiopulmonary resuscitation training program for all health staff as part of Health Month.

- **Youth Film:** The Jodrikdrik Non Jodrikdrik produced a special performance of island music, health skits and puppet shows for the Alele Museum's weekly TV program that is one of the most widely watched shows in the Marshalls.

- **Outer Islands:** Health Month sparked action all over the Marshalls. On Likiep Atoll, health workers are using weekly well baby clinics to teach mothers about growth monitoring and the importance of immunizations. On Ebeye, a teenage youth group has formed to focus attention on young people, and is planning music, health and sports programs for the island which has the second largest population here.

Promoting Primary Health Care in the Marshall Islands

The January, 1986 shift to primary health programs is beginning to pay off, said Health Services Secretary Marie Maddison.

"People are responding to our outreach. They are coming to clinics to get checked," she said.

She pointed to several positive signs of change. "In early 1987 we had a very depressing report from Likiep about the health of children. But the latest report shows a lot of improvement -- 80%

of the children had gained weight" -- almost a complete reversal from the previous report. She attributed the change to well baby clinics and health education.

In addition, she said the increasing numbers of people coming into the Family Planning office and other community clinics is an encouraging development.

Health Services new em-
Continued on page 4



Family Planning staff Minna Michael counsels a client on using the growth monitoring chart for her child.

Peace Corps Helping Health Drive

The arrival of eight Peace Corps health educators late last year has helped to boost primary health programs on many of the outer islands. Trained by Health Education and Family Planning staff last September, the Volunteers (Ellen Opie, Lisa Parker, Betty Schreiber, Marie Wells, Patti Puican, Vern Smith, Mike Flaherty and Alice Rabson) have been working closely with community health workers.

Activities have stepped up since a March evaluation of their efforts and intensive training in family planning, STDs, nutrition, etc. The Volunteers produced new health education materials at the conclusion of the training for use on the outer islands.

They are now supporting the efforts of health assistants and traditional birth attendants at well-baby clinics on the outer islands, working with youth groups and especially helping to improve vital record keeping.

Promoting Primary Health in the Marshalls

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phasis on primary care has brought many changes including the addition of Assistant Secretary for Preventive Services Jan Alfred, formerly director of the Family Planning program.

Alfred said three programs are being singled out for major focus this year: immu-



Family Planning's Jodrikdik Non Jodrikdik Ilo Ejmour produced a special program for the Alele Museum during Health Month. Alele staff Leginbo Frank, right, films the group.

LIVELY YOUTH HEALTH PROGRAMS

It all started last year with a 12-day summer time health seminar for 15 youth. Many health workers gave talks, demonstrations and showed films on primary health care issues. The idea was to train a group of young people who would in turn educate their peers, who account for well over 50% of the population.

The group combined students from four Majuro high schools as well as out of

Family Planning's youth clients have tripled in the year since the Jodrikdik group formed.

school youth. Their first project was to come up with health education materials to present at the end of the seminar. The variety of presentations -- from skits and songs to flip charts and posters -- showed the creativity and enthusiasm the group had for the project.

Since then, the group performed during the Alele

Museum's annual cultural festival, filmed special TV programs, participated in radio broadcasts, led presentations at health fairs and at elementary and high school classes, in addition to volunteering time to help at the Family Planning and Health Education offices.

The Jodrikdik Non Jodrikdik Ilo Ejmour (Youth to Youth in Health) attention-getting activities are largely responsible for the rise in youth family planning clients.

Between January and March 1986, Family Planning averaged five visits a month from youth 19 and under. A year later, that number has more than tripled: January through March, 1987 records show 15 visits each month in the age group, a number that is expected to grow as the Jodrikdik expand their outreach activities.

Youth health seminars similar to last year's are planned for this summer.

Primary health means preventing illness and treating problems before hospitalization is needed.

nizations, pre-natal clinics and child growth monitoring.

"We're losing a lot of our kids needlessly," said Alfred. "These programs can have an immediate impact."

"Our primary health care

approach is to try to build 'community infrastructure', which includes dispensary services, pure water, health education, the provision of family planning and maternal child health. Community response is essential. People need to help by initiating the first step of bringing their child into our clinics."

Maddison agreed, adding that, "Outreach by our health workers is very important."

Ejmour Ebed Ilo Lubiden Beim is a publication of the Family Health Project (Family Planning), Health Education and Continuing Education for Primary Health Workers in the Ministry of Health Services. For further information on our programs, write to the address below or call us at 3326, 3315 or 3634.

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