

# PRESS RELEASE



## TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

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### MASS IMMUNIZATION IN PONAPE

A single case of measles was reported in the Ponape District early in July. This was followed about ten days later by the appearance of 17 secondary cases, according to Dr. William M. Peck, Assistant Commissioner for Public Health.

Because the last outbreak of measles in Ponape District was in 1959 (and a few cases in 1960), Dr. Peck felt that mass immunization should be given to all children under 12 years of age. The National Communicable Disease Center at Atlanta, Georgia, was contacted and 3,000 doses of measles vaccine, stock-piled for such emergency purpose, was sent along with Ped-O-Jet guns for rapid use. A physician from the Communicable Disease Center has arrived with an additional 8,000 doses of vaccine and is now in Ponape. He is helping to plan and carry out wide-scale vaccination.

Dr. Peck said it appears that this prompt action of the Department of Public Health in Ponape and the physicians at the Communicable Disease Center have already terminated an outbreak, which, otherwise, might have grown into a serious epidemic.

Plans are being made with Communicable Disease Center personnel and with personnel from the Public Health Service Regional Office in San Francisco for wide-scale, on-going vaccination programs against many diseases and to involve the entire Territory.

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Dr. Peck pointed out that this kind of joint action has become possible because of the recent Partnership for Health Amendment which has made it possible for the Trust Territory to participate in United States Federal Grant Programs, just as every state, Guam, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico are able to do so.

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