

HEALTH WORK HALVES INFANT DEATH RATE

Many Mothers Also Saved by Commonwealth Fund in Rural Experiments.

Deaths of infants and mothers due to childbirth were reduced on an average of more than one-half in experimental groups in widely separated rural communities where public health care was given mothers before the births of their children, the Commonwealth Fund, of 578 Madison Avenue, which conducted the tests, announced yesterday.

Of 10,000 children born in these communities, the fund announced, about 2,500 were born under the auspices of public health workers.

"Expressed in terms of deaths per 1,000 births," the report stated, "the maternal death rate among the mothers cared for was 3.2, as compared with 7.6 for those not cared for. The stillbirth rate was 25.8 in the group under care and 48.4 in the group not cared for. The infant death rate under one month of age was 16.3 per 1,000 live births among those cared for and 39.4 among those not reached by this service."

Public health service also reduced materially the death rate among babies between 1 month and 1 year of age, the report added, the death rate in this class being only 18.1 per 1,000 among 6,000 children reached by that service, compared with 47.6 per 1,000 among 3,500 infants who did not have the benefit of that care.

The experiments were conducted in Fargo, N. D.; Athens, Clarke County, Ga.; Rutherford County, Tenn., and Salem, Marion County, Ore. They have been conducted by Courtenay Dinwiddie, and the last demonstration by the fund was announced to end on Dec. 31.