

NINE young graduates of the University School of Medicine are playing important roles in a great new field of public service—preventive medicine.

Only during the last year has the State of Oklahoma really awakened to the importance of stopping disease before it starts. Stimulated by an offer of federal aid under the Social Security Act, and by the missionary work done by the Oklahoma Public Health Department, many parts of the state have set up county public health units.

For the first time, local disease *prevention* programs are being carried on in the state on a large scale. The State Department of Public Health had accomplished much in prevention and control of epidemics and by education and by immunization programs.

But in the final analysis, experts agreed that *local* continuous effort is necessary to carry on an adequate program of preventive medical service.

The nine O. U. medical graduates who have become directors of County Health Units in Oklahoma under this new program are: Dr. Guy H. Williams, '34, Dr. Johnny A. Blue, '34; Dr. John Hackler, '33; Dr. Glen W. McDonald, '34; Dr. Grady F. Mathews, '25; Dr. Leo Evans, '27; Dr. Charles E. Leonard, '32; Dr. J. T. Bell, '35; and Dr. W. O. Murphy, '35.

They are paid reasonably good salaries, and are expected to do a tremendous lot of work.

Imagine taking the responsibility for the following program in an entire county:

1. Control of communicable diseases.
2. Sanitation of milk and water supplies, and proper disposal of sewage and excreta, both urban and rural.
3. Maternity and infancy service.
4. School hygiene programs.
5. Public health education.

The director of the full time health unit is required to devote all of his time to the work, and does not engage in any private practice whatever.

He is assisted by a full time registered public health nurse, a clerk to keep records, and a full time sanitarian who is trained for technical inspections.

The program is carefully designed to interfere in no way with the legitimate



Dr. Glen W. McDonald, '34, and Nurse Williams, in the Cleveland County Health Office, make sure that this youngster won't have diphtheria.

Sooner microbe fighters

practice of medicine, Dr. C. M. Pearce, State Health Commissioner explains.

"The entire object of a Health Unit is to prevent disease, rather than cure it after it is developed," he said.

Many communicable diseases are prevalent in Oklahoma—typhoid, dysentery, tuberculosis, meningitis, scarlet fever, smallpox, rabies, malaria and diphtheria.

These communicable diseases are easily spread, and one case in a community may be the cause of a widespread, death-dealing epidemic. Yet these diseases *are all preventable if proper precautions are taken.*

The human misery and the economic loss resulting from disease are immense. The value of organized effort to prevent disease is so obvious that the only wonder is that this new program has been so slow in coming.

Much of the work of the health units is done through the schools. The medical director personally conducts clinics among all school children, and pre-school children, and gives each a thorough examination for any defects. He recommends corrections of physical defects of children to the extent that the parents can take their children to their own family physicians, if need be, for treatment.

Immunization treatments are given as needed to protect against diphtheria and typhoid.

He is on hand at the start of any serious epidemic, as meningitis, typhoid fever,

diphtheria or smallpox, and takes over personally the fight to control such dangerous epidemics.

In other words, as Dr. Pearce puts it, the whole county is as one family to the medical director. He is the family doctor.

He has to be resourceful. Much of his work consists of giving typhoid or diphtheria inoculations to large groups of rural children, often in makeshift "clinics" with few or no conveniences.

The medical director supervises the work of the sanitarian who takes samples of water and milk supplies to guard against filth-borne disease.

And he directs the work of the health nurse who has such varied duties as home visits, immunization of children, dispensation of prenatal and post-natal education, teaching of child care, public health educational work, and teaching of pre-

vention and control of communicable disease.

Aside from its specific jobs, the County Health Unit ties in with the medical profession, the school, Parent-Teacher Associations, rural home demonstration and all farm club work, law enforcing bodies, religious organizations and civic organizations. The Health Unit co-ordinates the efforts of all these groups toward preservation of the public health.

The nine Sooners who are directors of these units are participating in a remarkably vital project for the good of the social order. It's no accident that microbes are on the run in many parts of Oklahoma.

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Army assignments received

Five Sooner reserve officers are now assigned to the Ninth Ordnance Company, Maintenance, a regular army unit now stationed at Fort Sill. They are Wayne R. Fanson, '31, first lieutenant; Marion C. Dorney, '37, second lieutenant; Francis S. Livermore, '36, second lieutenant; William R. Clarke, '36, second lieutenant, and Alden W. Suderman, '37, second lieutenant.

The 59th Ordnance Company, Ammunition, also a regular army unit at Fort Sill, will have among its reserve officers in the field, Second Lieutenants Ronald B. Shuman, assistant professor of economics in the University; Doane Tolleason, '28, and Glenn Houston, '37.