

Shot Levels In Rural Areas Good

Commissioner Frederick McGinnis, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, announced today that immunization levels in rural Alaska appear to be good.

The Section of Community Health, Alaska Division of Public Health, recently conducted a survey of 37 predominantly native communities to determine the degree of protection of children against preventable communicable diseases (polio, measles, whooping cough, tetanus and diphtheria).

Immunization records of 3,774 children through age sixteen were examined. The survey was conducted in ten villages in the Northern region, thirteen in the Southcentral region, and fourteen in the Southeastern region.

The Commissioner disclosed there are some areas where certain immunization levels are low. For example, many children received the diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus (D.P.T.) series in infancy, but did not receive the recommended booster shot at the time of school entry.

Similarly, many children were found to lack a booster polio dose, indicating partial risk if exposed.

The survey was an undertaking of the Division's Immunization Program, to identify localities where there are children who need greater protection. The survey did not cover urban areas where immunization levels are more difficult to determine.

Parents in cities are urged to be sure their children are protected either by consulting their doctor or attending Borough clinics.