



# MENTAL RETARDATION BULLETIN

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

DATE OF ISSUE

January 31, 1990

EFFECTIVE DATE

IMMEDIATELY

NUMBER

00-90-03

SUBJECT:

CHILDREN'S CARDIAC PROGRAM

BY:

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Deputy Secretary for Mental Retardation

## SCOPE:

County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Administrators  
Early Intervention Program Directors  
Base Service Unit Directors

## PURPOSE:

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide a description of the Cardiac Program for Children administered through the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

## BACKGROUND:

The Children's Cardiac Program is engaged in the identification, diagnosis, and treatment of children with cardiac conditions and/or heart disease. This program was first implemented in 1945 and continues to serve children from infancy through age 21 years.

Early identification of infants, who are manifesting symptoms of cardiac conditions, can realize positive impact on their future quality of life. Congenital heart disease occurs in six out of every 1,000 live births. The highest mortality rate occurs during the first year of life.

During 1988, the program served over 3,500 children in Pennsylvania.

## DISCUSSION:

The Children's Cardiac Program is administered throughout Pennsylvania located in 16 outpatient clinics and four medical centers (see attachment).

COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:  
Mr. Mel Knowlton, Office of Mental Retardation, P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA, 17105,  
telephone: (717) 783-5764 or Albert Moliter, Division of Rehabilitation, P.O. Box 90,  
Harrisburg, PA, 17108, telephone: (717) 783-6536.

The major objectives of the cardiac program include:

- a) to decrease mortality from heart disease,
- b) to identify unserved children and provide access to medical services,
- c) to alleviate the stigma of "murmurs" associated with "organic" heart disease, and
- d) to facilitate the ability of each individual to attain optimal development.

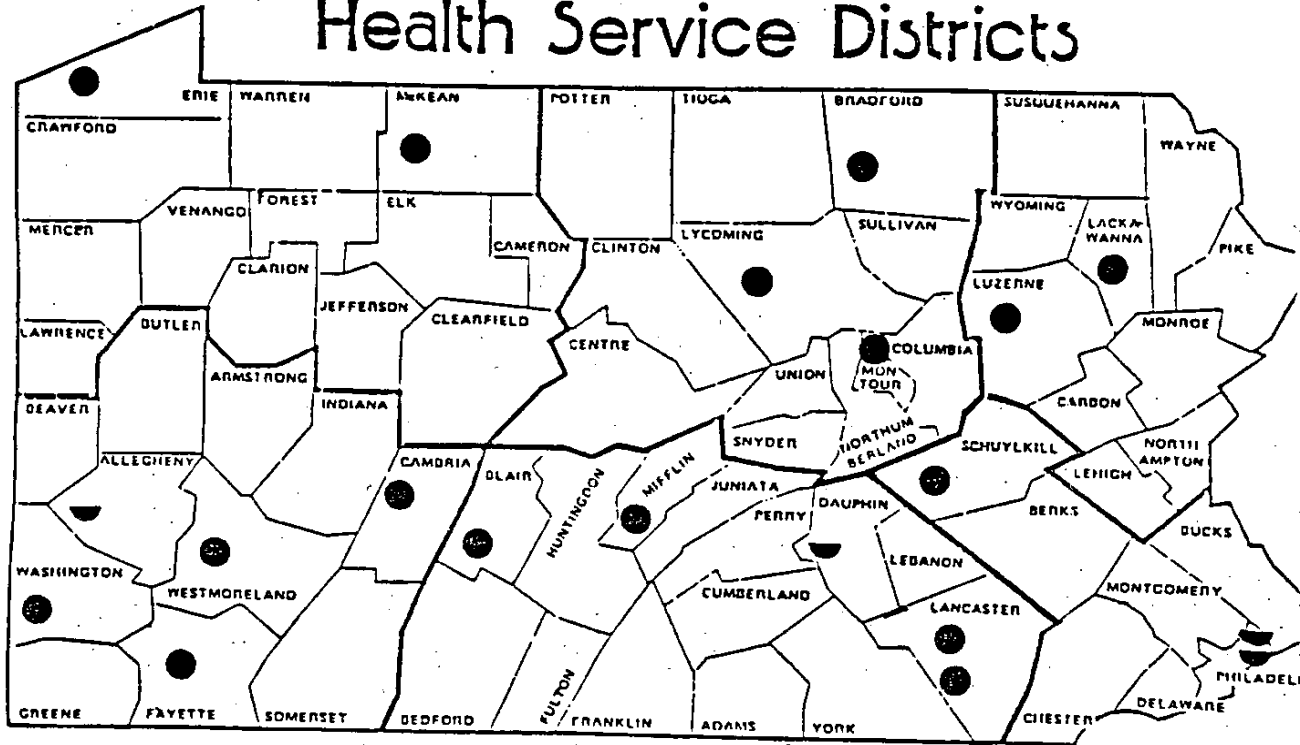
Treatment services include outpatient, inpatient, surgical/medical care, appliances, pharmaceuticals, consultation, and support services. Social work, nutrition, physical therapy, dental care, and genetic counseling are integral components of this program.

All children from birth through age 21 years who are experiencing symptomatology of cardiac irregularities are eligible for diagnostic services, without a charge, through the Department of Health. All families participate in a financial review process to determine their ability to pay for medical services. All third-party resources including private insurance, family health plans, employe coverage, and other applicable resources are utilized, when indicated.

Inquiries may be directed to any of the Department of Health's State Health Centers or through contact with the toll-free State Health Hotline number: 1-800-692-7254.

CARDIAC CLINIC

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Health Service Districts



- ◐ INPATIENT CENTERS
- OUTPATIENT CLINICS