

INFLUENZA REPORTS INDICATE INCREASE

Many Delayed Cards Now Being Listed, Says Director of Health Department.

Statisticians attached to the department of public health today are engaged in checking up reported cases of influenza to determine how many are new and how many are of long standing. This procedure was decided upon because of the increased number of cases reported by physicians during the last few days. These returns appear to show an increased daily number of cases, but in many instances an investigation has revealed that doctors have delayed mailing contagious-disease cards. An inquiry conducted this morning showed that a package containing cards of 67 reported cases received from a practitioner contained the names of more than 40 patients who were taken ill at least a fortnight ago. The doctor, in a note to the health authorities, explained that he had been too busy attending sick calls to fill in the blanks sooner.

Despite the uncertainty regarding the date of origin of many of the recently reported cases of influenza, Director William H. Davis believes the disease again is on the increase in Pittsburgh.

"It is difficult to get a correct estimate of the daily number of cases, because the doctors are too busy to fill in and mail blanks to the department," he said this morning. "The reports submitted to me show that there have been a total of 20,873 cases of influenza reported to the department by physicians in Pittsburgh. It is my guess, based on information gained by our investigators, nurses and doctors, that only about one out of five cases have been reported to the health headquarters."

During the 18-hour period ended at 10 o'clock this morning 216 new cases of influenza were reported. Yesterday for a similar period 133 new cases were listed. In the same time 17 cases of pneumonia were reported making a total of 1,368 cases. The deaths reported were pneumonia, 11; influenza-pneumonia, 16; influenza, 2, a total of 29 in the 18-hour period.

Since the epidemic commenced more than seven weeks ago there has been more than 4,000 deaths from pneumonia and influenza. Under normal conditions there would have been only about 400 deaths from pneumonia in the same period.

Dr. Phillip E. Marks of the bureau of infectious diseases today announced that the investigation by the sanitary officers of the health department in the Bloomfield and Homewood districts revealed that the new outbreak of the disease was due largely to visiting and nursing. It was learned that the "point of contact" was due principally to the carelessness of the people themselves.

"The situation is still bad," said Dr. Marks. "If the indiscriminate visiting and careless nursing continues, new orders controlling it will have to be issued."