

SUMMARY

Although the mortality of tuberculosis disease in New Zealand shows a falling tendency since 1945, the registered incidence shows an accretion of 540 cases in 1946 and 204 cases in 1947.

With case-finding and control organized as it is, there is reason to feel that stability has been obtained and that a further reduction in mortality and incidence can be expected.

However, in spite of this apparent improvement, tuberculosis still holds in New Zealand the unenviable position amongst other diseases as reported last year.

It is felt that the completion, as soon as possible, of the building for new and extra hospital accommodation as planned for tuberculous patients will contribute towards a further decline in the incidence and mortality of tuberculosis.

DIVISION OF MATERNAL WELFARE

BIRTHS

The further increased number of births in 1947 imposed an added strain on the maternity services of New Zealand, but this was, to a degree, borne by the addition of beds to existing public hospital annexes and by the use of public-hospital wards where no other accommodation was available.

Comparison of Birth-rates Per 1,000 of Mean Population for Years Ending 31st December, 1946 and 1947

				1946.	1947.
Non-Maori	..	..	..	25·24	26·42
Maori	..	..	..	56·49	46·86
Total	..	..	..	27·05	27·63

Non-Maori births were the greatest number recorded in any one year in New Zealand and the rate the highest since 1912.

ACCOMMODATION

(a) *Hospital Boards*.—In the four main centres during 1946 and 1947 the Hospital Boards have provided 175 additional beds. In Christchurch the new St. Helens Hospital is in course of construction to provide 50 beds.

In the provincial towns of Blenheim, Hastings, and Tauranga, up-to-date annexes now provide 46 beds.

At the end of 1947 a total of 1,246 beds was available under Hospital Board supervision, as compared with 1,180 in 1946, representing a gain of 66 beds.

(b) *Private Hospitals*.—The total number of available beds in private maternity hospitals at the end of 1947 was 829, as compared with 942 in 1946, representing a loss of 113 beds.

The following figures show the total available bed accommodation for New Zealand :—

Public hospitals	..	..	..	1,246
Private hospitals	..	..	..	829
St. Helens Hospitals	..	..	..	106
Alexandria Home, Wellington	..	..	..	19

2,200

This figure represents a bed ratio of 5·54 beds per 1,000 of female population in the age group 15–44 years.