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# MANDATED TERRITORY OF WESTERN SAMOA.

(SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, ADMINISTRATION OF WESTERN  
SAMOA, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1924.)

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*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

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THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE ADMINISTRATOR OF WESTERN SAMOA.

I HAVE the honour to submit the annual report of the Department of Health for the year ended 31st March, 1924. In previous years the medical report has been included in the annual report on the Territory, but, for reasons given below, it has been considered advisable to submit a separate, more detailed report.

Although the islands of the South Pacific are fortunate in that the most serious scourges of the tropics are not present, they all have serious problems to solve regarding disease and its prevention. To ensure satisfactory results it is necessary to have co-operation in the work carried out in the different groups. This co-operation is not easy of attainment where various Administrations of different nationalities control the scattered island groups, and where there is very little or no interchange of ideas. The publication and exchange of detailed medical reports will give us information as to what is being attempted and what is being accomplished outside our own boundaries, and will be an important factor in the development of co-operation.

## GENERAL SURVEY OF THE WORK FOR THE YEAR.

In 1923 the positions of Chief Medical Officer and of Medical Officer of Health were combined, and therefore the past year is the first one in which the activities of the two divisions of the Department of Health (Clinical and Public Health) have been controlled by one head.

The year under review is also the first one in which free medical treatment has been given to the Natives of the Territory. As the result of a request on the part of the Natives that a medical offering be paid each year by every adult male, instead of each individual paying his own medical expenses, a medical charge of £1 per adult male was levied, and free treatment instituted. This resulted in an immediate and large increase in the numbers seeking medical aid, and also in a more insistent demand for the establishment of district dispensaries. It also gave the Department the opportunity of organizing campaigns against such diseases as hook-worm and frambœsia, the systematic treatment of which was impossible where a charge was made for treatment.

The first and chief essential to the success of the medical service is that the confidence of the Natives must be gained and retained. The Samoans are a conservative race, and the gaining and retaining of their confidence is no easy task. That we are rapidly gaining it is shown by the readiness with which they enter the hospital for operations, and the increasing demand throughout the Territory for European methods of treating the sick.