

TREASURY DEPARTMENT
 UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
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PER CAPITA MEDICINAL REQUIREMENTS OF NARCOTICS

DATA SECURED IN A NARCOTIC SURVEY OF
 ALLEGANY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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PER CAPITA MEDICINAL REQUIREMENTS OF NARCOTICS.¹

Data Secured in a Narcotic Survey of Allegany County, Maryland.

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In connection with the drug-addiction studies being carried out by the United States Public Health Service, a narcotic survey of Allegany County, Md., was made during the period May 8 to 28, 1924. The object of this survey was to secure accurate data on the quantities of narcotics used annually for medicinal purposes in a restricted area, so that a reliable basis might be obtained for computing the requirements of the country as a whole.

Allegany County, Md., was selected for this purpose for several reasons, namely, (1) because of its remoteness from the sea coast and boundary lines, where the greater possibility of obtaining narcotics might tend to vitiate the results; (2) because the county is fairly distant from and contains no large cities in which it is thought that abnormal conditions are more likely to prevail; (3) because the occupations of its inhabitants are quite diversified—farming, mining, rail-roading, and manufacturing being represented; (4) because the county is easily accessible from Washington. In other words, it was thought that Allegany County represents as nearly as possible a normal unit within easy reach of Washington where conditions prevail which can be taken as typical of the country as a whole.

The actual work of the survey consisted in visiting all of the narcotic registrants in the county and compiling from their records the amounts of narcotics dispensed or used during the period of one year. In all there were visited 69 physicians, 12 dentists, 20 retailers (pharmacists), 3 wholesalers (pharmacists), 1 veterinarian, and 5 hospitals and sanitoria. The records of each were examined in detail. These records showed that for the period July 1, 1922, to June 30, 1923, the following quantities of narcotics were dispensed or used:

TABLE 1.—*Total quantities of opiates dispensed or used.*

	Grains.
Opium.....	33, 937
Codeine sulphate and phosphate.....	29, 410
Morphine sulphate and hydrochloride.....	22, 284
Ethylmorphine hydrochloride (dionin).....	4, 724
Diacetylmorphine hydrochloride (heroin).....	1, 940
Cotamine hydrochloride (stypticin).....	788
Apomorphine hydrochloride.....	93
	Fl. oz.
Exempt preparations (paregoric, Bateman's drops, Godfrey's cordial, etc.).....	10, 366
<i>Total cocaine dispensed or used.</i>	
Cocaine hydrochloride.....	11,485

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though they were sold only in small amounts (in quantities not exceeding 2 fluid ounces), they were dispensed too frequently in some cases to the same individuals. It is also realized that some of the residents of the county may have purchased narcotics outside of the county (in near-by counties for instance); but it is thought that any error in the total amounts resulting from this cause would be counterbalanced by that introduced through the purchases made within the county by non-residents.

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