

# Application of a model for predicting morbidity in children from a low socioeconomic level Aplicación de un modelo predictivo de morbilidad en niños de nivel socioeconómico bajo.

Araya,

Espinoza,

Brunser,

Pacheco,

Cruchet,

An instrument to be used at a primary health care level was built on the basis of a predictive model for diarrhea obtained during a previous study. The instrument was applied to 720 mothers or caregivers of infants living in the Southeastern area of Santiago. 83 infants who fulfilled the requisites of the instrument were surveyed during July-August 1989 and compared to age, nutritional and socioeconomic status matched children not fulfilling the same requisites. Infants selected by the predictive instrument suffered 4 times more morbid episodes and respiratory infections and 5 times more diarrheal episodes than controls. Symptoms were present in them during 50% of the survey period as opposed to 14% in controls. Mothers of children at risk had inadequate behaviors in respect to health care of their children and did not follow many of the National Health programs available for their families. The predictive instrument tested may be useful to identify children at high risk of morbidity,