

SERPASIL DETAILING IN THE FOND DU LAC AREA

It can reasonably be assumed that the 55 practicing physicians in Fond du Lac and its satellite towns received their fair share of direct mail, journal advertising, journal articles, exposure to convention exhibits and papers at meetings. The same is probably true for detailing, but through our interviews with the detail men it is possible to elaborate somewhat on their approaches locally.

Two men detailed for Ciba in this area during the year of study—one who covered the territory at the time Serpasil was introduced until August 1954 and a replacement who then took over. The original detail man was briefed on Serpasil at a three-day regional meeting in Chicago in November 1953. Later that month he made his first detail on Serpasil in the Fond du Lac area.

His schedule called for three days in Fond du Lac and he was able to see about six doctors a day. Every six weeks he returned for another three days, always calling upon the 15 doctors he considered most important and, by rotation, upon three or four others each of whom he visited only once or twice a year. It is interesting to note that 10 of the 12 physicians who wrote Serpasil prescriptions during our audit period were among the 25 or so that he detailed during its first year. Whether they prescribed because of his

detailing or he selected them as the most likely prescribers cannot be determined, but probably it worked both ways.

Not only did he leave samples of Serpasil with each physician, but also simultaneously with his first visit to Fond du Lac the company mailed samples to them.

He spent about 9 hours on each visit detailing the pharmacies in Fond du Lac, and he left with each an initial supply of 25 Serpasil tablets. He also called on the hospital, setting up an exhibit there and visiting both the hospital pharmacy and laboratories.

During Serpasil's first year he also detailed other drugs, but devoted 80 to 90 per cent of his effort to this one drug. He estimated that he spent 40 to 50 minutes of each working hour waiting and only 10 or 20 minutes in actually talking with physicians and pharmacists.

The second detail man carried along in much the same pattern, but visited Fond du Lac only six times a year for two days each time. He devoted only about half of his efforts to Serpasil. Neither one of the two men detailed physicians outside of Fond du Lac proper; and only 36 of the 55 doctors remembered ever having been detailed on this drug.