

# STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

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June 24, 1970

P. O. Box 758  
Beeville, Texas 78102

Hector P. Garcia, M.D.  
1315 Bright at Morgan Ave.  
Corpus Christi, Texas 78405

Subject: Manuel Martinez                      Re: Martinez, Armando (age 10)  
          Route 1 Box 243                         Martinez, Irene (age 9)  
          Beeville, Texas 78102                 Martinez, Rodolfo (age 8)

Dear Dr. Garcia:

A home visit with Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Martinez and their three children was made at their convenience on 6-22-70. Mr. Martinez stated that his concern in being able to meet financial obligations such as house payments and higher living expenses prompted his asking for help. As you noted in your referral, Mrs. Martinez must remain in the home to care for Armando, the ten year old son who is confined to a wheelchair, and she no longer is able to work to supplement her husband's income. Mr. Martinez is an employee of Roberts & McKenzie Hardware Inc., where he has worked for the past five years. This couple has an attractive, comfortable home which they are purchasing. It is located about two miles from Beeville, near Mr. Martinez' parents and other relatives.

Of the three children of Mr. and Mrs. Martinez, the nine year old daughter, Irene, appears normal in health. She will be in the fourth grade in school in September.

The youngest son, Rodolfo, attended the first grade this year. He is able to walk but cannot run. He has normal use of his hands and arms. In this home visit he was observed walking, sitting and lying on the floor. He required no assistance in any of these activities. Rodolfo has not been examined by Dr. Roosth but Mr. Martinez is considering taking him for a check-up. Although this child partially is restricted in activities (such as not being able to run), he is in much more normal condition than his brother was at this same age. Because of this Mr. Martinez is hopeful the child will outgrow the disease described below.

Approximately five years ago Armando (age 10) was thoroughly examined by Dr. H. Roosth following a referral because of abnormal conditions noted in x-rays of the child's pelvic area. A biopsy was done of the muscular tissue in Armando's leg. The diagnosis was progressive muscular dystrophy with no treatment prescribed other than exercises of the arms and legs. This child was seen by Dr. Roosth for two years, but has been dismissed from regular appointments since nothing more could be done medically for the child. There is no pain, only a progressive loss of muscular function.

Mr. and Mrs. Martinez were advised of the facilities at Gonzalez Warm Springs Foundation, but decided to keep Armando with them for his expected short life span. Armando is totally confined to his wheelchair now. His feet hang uselessly in a "tip-toe" position. He cannot raise his arms. He still has some use of his hands, but strength is diminishing. He can hold a pencil, strum a toy guitar and lift a small glass half filled with liquid. Because he is inactive, he has gained excess weight and is increasingly difficult to lift. A wheelchair has been provided by the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation for as long as it is needed.

This family also was visited by the Bee County Health Nurse, Mrs. R. T. Dallas, who is cognizant of the family health history and of the expected developments in the children. Mr. and Mrs. Martinez have been advised and understand there is no financial eligibility for help now. If medical expenses should develop, such as transportation to a doctor, prescribed medications or treatments, additional or replacement of wheelchairs, the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation will assist. The Aid to Permanently and Totally Disabled when a person reaches eighteen years of age, was explained to Mr. and Mrs. Martinez.

These are bright, intelligent children. The attitude of the entire family is compassionate and harmonious. They all accept the fact that this disease usually is terminal at approximately eighteen years of age. In spite of this, the children seem happy and play together in "school" games.

Mr. and Mrs. Martinez are exploring means of supplementing their present income by self-employment that can be done at home, such as dress-making by Mrs. Martinez. Mr. Martinez currently is being trained as a clerk where he works, which should result in higher earnings. He has considered going to school to learn a trade; however, he was advised that his G.I. Educational Benefit had expired. This young couple is making a positive effort to cope with their misfortune.

Muscular dystrophy is no stranger to this family, because Mrs. Martinez had three brothers who were victims of the disease, the last having died in 1969. She has two married sisters with children who are developing symptoms of muscular dystrophy. Mr. and Mrs. Martinez were encouraged to learn all they can about this disease in order to counsel their children who reach maturity since it is transmitted from one generation to another.

Dr. Garcia, your concern for this unfortunate family is understood and shared by all who are acquainted with them. Please be assured that we will be available to assist this young family in whatever service they are eligible to receive.

Respectfully yours,

*Therese M. Cowell*  
Mrs. Therese M. Cowell  
PW Worker I

TMC/ars

cc: Mrs. Hugh R. Cook, Regional Administrator, Corpus Christi, Texas  
Mr. Donald M. Loving, Social Service Program Director, Corpus Christi, Texas  
Mrs. Nina G. Young, Social Service Supervisor, Beeville, Texas