

History of the International Association of Paediatric Dentistry

Part 6: International Symposium on Child Dental Health in London

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Developments in London

Following meticulous planning, the British Paedodontic Society (BPS) mounted a highly successful International Symposium on Child Dental Health from 19 to 21 April 1967 at the London Hospital Medical College. In that year, David (Dennis) Berman was Secretary of the BPS and Donald Norman was Treasurer. Their contribution to the organization of the event was crucial. Geoffrey Leighton Slack, O.B.E., Dean of Dental Studies at the London Hospital Medical College (Fig. 1), was President of both the BPS and the Symposium. In his presidential message, Slack reminded participants that the World Health Organization described health 'as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity'. He emphasized the need for health authorities to secure the health of children as an investment for the future. Slack continued: 'Unfortunately the prevalence of dental disease is so great that the dental profession has of necessity been concerned with the provision of a reparative service for only a proportion of those affected ... none of us can be proud of our modern society when amidst so much scientific achievement, the happiness of children is jeopardized by disease.' Finally, Slack indicated his hope that international discussions would lead to the prevention of dental disease in children. The objective of the International Symposium was to bring together colleagues from different countries to discuss common problems and their possible solution. In addition to the scientific lectures (Table 1) there were many table demonstra-

tions. An invitation lecture on 'Pulp Therapy in the USA' was given by Paul Starkey, President of the American Society of Dentistry for Children (ASDC) and Professor of Pedodontics at Indiana University School of Dentistry. It was followed by a dinner at which the guest of honour was Professor Arvid



Fig. 1. Professor Geoffrey L. Slack, President of the first International Symposium on Child Dental Health.

Table 1. Programme for the first International Symposium held at the London Hospital, April 1967 (speakers from the UK unless otherwise indicated).

President's address – Professor G. L. Slack

Experimental research into dental diseases of childhood – Professor B. Cohen, Nuffield Professor of Dental Sciences at the Royal College of Surgeons of England

Cine film studies of the developing child – Professor W. J. Tulley, Professor of Orthodontics at Guy's Hospital Dental School

Session: 'The child'

Emotional factors in child developmental – J. H. Khan, Consultant Psychiatrist, London Borough of Newham

Disadvantaged children – D. Cooper, Chief Inspector, Children's Department, Home Office

Research on children at school – W. D. Wall, Director, National Foundation for Educational Research

Investment in children – M. L. Kellmer-Pringle, Director, National Bureau for Cooperation in Child Care

Session: 'Research in children's dentistry'

Some aspects of traumatic injury to the young dental pulp – D. J. Stewart, Queens University of Belfast

Psychological aims in paedodontics – J. E. Persson, Karolinska Institutet School of Dentistry, Stockholm, Sweden

Premier incident devolution de la dent de sagesse chez l'enfant de 13 ans – Professor A. Boucher, President SFP, Paris, France

The histopathology of deciduous pulps in relation to their treatment – P. Hobson, University of Manchester

Some aspects of general anaesthesia for children's dentistry – J. N. Swallow, Welsh National School of Medicine, Cardiff

Dental manifestations in children with hypophosphatasia – G. M. Ritchie, University College Hospital, London

Unerrupted bicuspid width as determined by oblique cephalometric projection and Moyers-mixed dentition analyses – Professor T. K. Barber, University of Illinois, USA

Tetracycline deposition in the enamel – J. Weyman, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Reaction and regeneration of periodontal tissue during orthodontic treatment with fixed appliances – K. H. Rateitschak, University of Zurich, Switzerland

Psychology and psycho-pharmacy in dental treatment of children – G. Falcolini, Rome, Italy

Session: 'Further research in children's dentistry'

The effect of fluoride on the acid solubility of dentine – Professor T. Morch, University of Bergen, Norway

Topical application of stannous fluoride: caries preventive effects after eight years – Professor O. Backer Dirks, University of Utrecht, Holland

The effect of sodium fluoride dentifrice on caries in school children – G. Koch, University of Lund, Malmo, Sweden

The *in vitro* transport of F-18 across the rat duodenal wall – Professor A. R. Hagen, University of Oslo, Norway

Caries status of 3-year-old children in Copenhagen with emphasis on dietary habits Professor E. Kisling, Royal Dental College, Copenhagen, Denmark

Study of early periodontal disease in children and young adults – J. E. Stoner and Professor A. S. Prophet, University College Hospital, London

Chronic fluoride poisoning of the child dentition – Professor A. Mugnier, J. Laufer, P. Gineste and G. Labellie, Paris, France

A clinical experiment with young children – N. A. K. M. van Erp, Merendreef, Holland

The influence of fluoride on the formation of caries-resistant teeth: a histological study – Professor S. Fiorentini, Presidente SIOI, Rome, Italy

The study of dental caries in urban and rural Greece – E. Giseli, Athens, Greece

Dental services for children in Czechoslovakia – V. Poncova, Chief, Division of Stomatology, Ministry of Health, Prague, Czechoslovakia

Caries prophylactic treatment of children in Sweden – P. Torell, Gotenburg, Sweden

A creative approach to teaching dental care – H. Colin Davis, Director, Oral Hygiene Service

Session: 'Dental care for children'

Early orthodontic prevention and treatment in maternity and kindergarten and its organization in Poland – Professor Labiszewska-Jaruzelska, Poland

Current developments in public dental services for children in the United States – Professor W. O. Young, past-President and Chairman ASDC, Department of Community Dentistry, University of Kentucky, USA

Dental care for children in England and Wales – A. G. Smith, Senior Dental Officer, Ministry of Health and Department of Education and Science

Syrriest of the Royal University of Lund, Sweden. The 200 participants came from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Eire, England, France, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Norway,

Poland, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, Wales, and USA. A number of them discussed the idea of establishing an international forum on children's dentistry.

The British perspective

Although earlier efforts had been made to unite the separate UK groups of the BPS, it was in 1967 that Berman suggested to Norman, who had replaced him as BPS Secretary, that he should pursue the idea. Norman was ably backed by Peter Heffer, the new Treasurer. A shrewd move was to nominate Phillip Holloway as President-elect. Although then working at Manchester Dental School in the North of England, he had retained contact with colleagues in London from where he originated. The committee hoped to achieve a truly national society during his presidency. Some discussions had started at the International Symposium. Holloway emphasized the need to invite speakers to London from the provinces and to arrange at least one meeting away from the capital, hopefully in Manchester. He suggested sending letters to colleagues in other parts of the UK. Thus, Norman wrote to Neil Swallow (Cardiff), Don Foster (Midlands), Denys Goose (Liverpool), Douglas Jackson (Leeds), A. J. (Tony) Hargreaves (Edinburgh), Andrew Carmichael (Glasgow), John McEwen (Dundee) and David Stewart (Belfast) to determine which groups were in existence and to gain their views on a possible amalgamation. He invited them to the London society's annual general meeting and dinner in October 1967.

International forum on children's dentistry

In July 1967, Professor Sergio Fiorentini, Secretary-General of the Societa Italiana di Odontoiatria Infantile (SIOI) wrote to Berman and Slack seeking support for a society of children's dentists in Europe. Following talks at the International Symposium the Italians discussed the possibility of holding a meeting in Sienna in 1969. Fiorentini had heard from Paul Starkey that the ASDC would support a meeting in Italy and would send the President or his representative to any important international meeting on children's dentistry to which the ASDC might be invited. A copy of Starkey's letter was sent to Berman as the UK link was considered to be important. The BPS signalled its encouragement to Fiorentini. As the Italians did not want to lose the scientific contributions of non-Italian speaking dentists they decided that the official languages of their assembly would be English, French and Italian, with simultaneous translations of the scientific sessions.

Meanwhile, French colleagues were arranging a symposium in Paris on 18 November 1967. This first French symposium was organized by the Société Française de Pédiodontie (SFP). On behalf of the BPS Norman offered best wishes for a successful meeting to Michel Schouker, the organizing Secretary. He said the BPS would be represented by Scott Page, Ken Williams and Barry Scheer. In December, Schouker wrote to Scheer stating that he had heard from the Scandinavian and Italian presidents of a proposed meeting of children's dentists in London in February 1968 and that he would attend with the President and another officer of the SFP.

In November, Syrrist wrote to Slack from Malmö as a member of the Svenska Pedodonti-Sällskapet, which was a section of the Nordic Pedodontic Society. Syrrist had just returned from a 3-week visit to the USA, his first for 27 years. Starkey, whom he met in London, had invited him to speak at an ASDC meeting in Washington. Syrrist also attended a conference of the American Academy of Pedodontics where there was much talk about international children's dentistry. In Washington, Syrrist had seen a poster advertising The First International Symposium on Pedodontics, to be held in Lima, Peru, in March 1968. Whilst realizing the need for international cooperation, Syrrist also understood the necessity to avoid clashes of meetings.

The Scandinavians had intended to turn the 1969 Nordic pedodontic meeting in Bergen, Norway, into the second international symposium. They were encouraged to take that action by Britain's Peter James and Neil Swallow, during a visit to the previous Nordic Conference, in Sweden. However, upon receiving Fiorentini's invitation to a symposium in Italy, the Swedes dropped their idea and gave support to the Italians.

Syrrist attended the ASDC's Council meeting. He said: "The Americans had the same attitude as the British; wholeheartedly cooperative, but not wanting to dominate any new arrangements". They left Syrrist to find a solution. Syrrist was given similar authority to act on behalf of the Nordic Pedodontic Society. Syrrist said he was willing to visit London, Paris and Rome for preliminary discussions if Slack thought it would help, but first wanted to be sure of British support, without which he felt it would be difficult to proceed. The BPS responded positively. In November, Giuliano Falcolini wrote to Berman from Rome confirming that the SIOI would organ-

ize and host the second international symposium in Sienna. The SIOI's *Bollettino* indicated that on 29 September the Assembly of the SIOI had "approvazione del II Simposio Internazionale di Odontologia Infantile da tenersi in Italia nel 1969".

The BPS

In January 1968 the BPS committee considered its next move. It was clear that, in contrast to the true national situation, internationally the BPS was seen as the British national organization on child dental health, particularly since the success of the International Symposium. It thus seemed to be the appropriate body with which organizations in other countries would negotiate on matters of mutual interest. Norman reminded his colleagues that the BPS could be proud of the stimulating influence of the London symposium, but its very success imposed on the society an obligation to work for a more truly national organization. The situation was

urgent following Syrrist's request for UK support for a meeting of delegates from a number of countries to consider an international organization. A paper from Phil Holloway emphasized the need for the UK study groups to form a single society, maintaining their individual characteristics as regional groups of the BPS. Thus, the current BPS would become the South East Group of the new BPS. He reiterated the point that a number of countries were developing national societies and that several invitations had been received for official UK representation at international meetings. There might also be calls for international cooperation in other aspects of children's dentistry. Holloway stressed the need for a truly British society rather than one representing only largely metropolitan interests. His proposals were speedily accepted by all the groups. By October 1966 the BPS became a national society, well placed to be in the forefront of efforts to establish an international society, as we shall see in Part 7.