

Historical Development of the British Paediatric Surveillance Unit (BPSU) of the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

What is the BPSU

A standardised and reproducible system for mounting surveillance of rare childhood disorders of public health importance.

Main Aims

To encourage and facilitate:

- research into uncommon childhood infections and disorders
- paediatricians in surveillance of uncommon disorders
- an increase in awareness of uncommon disorders
- a rapid response to public health emergencies
- dissemination of information about uncommon disorders
- improvement in prevention, treatment and service planning for uncommon disorders.

Clinical reporting: the Beginning

- 1962: Congenital malformation notification post thalidomide disaster
- 1970's: Lead ingestion surveillance through members of the BPA by Prof Donald Bartrop
- 1976-78 :National Childhood Encephalopathy Study
- 1977: Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (CDSC) set up by PHLS. Dr Spence Galbraith was its first director
- 1977: Dr Bill Marshall and Dr Tony Jackson suggested a clinical reporting system of uncommon or unusual events. Professor June Lloyd suggests paediatricians contribute to the reporting of infectious disease to CDSC.

Next Steps

- 1979 – 1980: BPA/CDSC surveillance of Neonatal necrotising enterocolitis
- 1981: Dr Martin Bellman persuades CDSC to undertake "passive" surveillance of Reye's syndrome in collaboration with the BPA; Dr Susan Hall assigned
- 1982: Dr David Harvey supports CDSC's proposal to add HUS and Kawasaki Disease, Haemorrhagic Shock Encephalopathy Syndrome to the report form
- 1984: BPA Executive supports papers by Dr Galbraith and Harvey to set up joint BPA/CDSC Surveillance Unit using "active" reporting system.

Some of the Players



Dr Spence Galbraith



Sir Cyril Clarke



Sir Peter Tizard



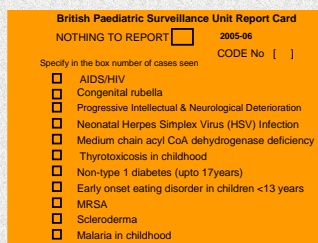
Prof Euan Ross



Prof David Baum



Dr Susan Hall



The orange card



Children Nationwide
 (WellChild) et al



BPSU Executive circa
 2006

Next Steps

- 1984: BPA Winter newsletter announced the formation of the Steering group: Sir Cyril Clarke (chair), Sir Peter Tizard, Dr David Baum, Dr Tim Chambers, Dr Spence Galbraith, Professor Euan Ross, Professor R Boyd, Dr Joan Davies, Dr Dan Reid and Dr J Smith
- 1985: appointment of medical coordinator Dr Susan Hall and administrator Myer Glickman; Professor Catherine Peckham joins the Steering Committee; formation of Scientific Advisory Committee
- October 1985 – March 1986: Pilot mailing of report cards
- 1986 – February: The birth of the BPSU was announced in the Times and on the Today programme
- 1985 – September: First BPSU Steering committee held
- 1986 – July: Surveillance of eight conditions began in July.

As Time Goes By

- 1986-87: RCPI representative Dr Ralph Counahan joins the Steering Committee
- 1990: Richard Lynn joins as scientific coordinator
- 1991: First time card has 12 conditions under surveillance
- 1997: BPSU launches its website
- 1998: International Network of Paediatric Surveillance Units formed
- 2001: Dr Chris Verity, after 5 years, retires as BPSU Executive chair.
- 2003: Sir Peter Tizard bursary introduced
- 2006: 20 years of surveillance.

Achievements

Over 60 studies undertaken which have had a public health and an educational impact; over 300 papers and presentations have been produced and the BPSU methodology has been imitated across the world.

Acknowledgment

The success of the BPSU is wholly due to the contribution made by paediatricians. We thank all those who have returned cards and reported cases over the years.

We also thank all our funders, in particular WellChild and the Dept of Health.