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Inter-American Investigation of Mortality in Childhood

Workshop in Pediatric Pathology
23 March-10 April 1970
São Paulo, Brazil

The Investigation, together with the Departments of Human Resources and Research and Development, organized a three-week workshop for pathologists chiefly responsible for autopsies of children of 11 projects. After careful search, the Department of Pathology of the Escola de Medicina da Santa Casa da Misericórdia in São Paulo, Brazil, was selected to conduct the workshop. Dr. Carlos Marigo, pediatric pathologist, acted as coordinator. Dr. Carlos V. Serrano, Co-Investigator of the Investigation, introduced the activities with description of the project, and assisted in defining the criteria for selection of multiple causes of death in the Investigation. The need for standardization and for establishing mechanisms to promote training of pathologists with clear concepts of pediatric pathology was emphasized.

The objectives of the workshop were defined as follows:

1. Improvement of quality of the pathological findings in the cases submitted to autopsy, within the framework of the Investigation.
2. Standardization of reporting system.
3. Initiation of selection of candidates for long-term program of training of pediatric pathologists for Latin America.

A condensed version of the report by Dr. Marigo and the list of participants follows:

1. Activities

The activities included the practice of complete autopsies with discussion on techniques and findings at the macroscopic and microscopic levels as well as anatomo-clinical correlation. There were also a series of conferences on special topics, discussions on material brought by the participants to the workshop, visits to some institutions and a terminal evaluation meeting.

1.1 Autopsies

During the course of the workshop 30 complete autopsies, 28 on children 0-4 and 2 on stillbirths were performed, half of them by the participants. A standard protocol with emphasis on pediatric pathology was followed in all cases. The number of conditions found in these 30 autopsies were:

<u>Disease conditions</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Disease conditions</u>	<u>Number</u>
Nutritional deficiency	21	Congenital anomalies of biliary tract	2
Dehydration, severe	8	Congenital anomalies of intestine	1
Prematurity	6	Congenital syphilis	2
Thimic-lymphatic hypoplasia	20	Miocarditis	2
Gastroenteritis and enterocolitis	17	Pulmonary abscess	1
Bronchopneumonia	15	Hemolytic disease of newborn	1
Otitis media	22	Wilms tumor	1
Meningitis	5	Stillbirth, due to mother's death	1
Septicemia	3	Stillbirth, cause unknown	1
Congenital anomalies of heart	3		

1.2 Discussions

On the basis of the material obtained from autopsies and with the active participation of pathologists, pediatricians and obstetricians, the following topics were discussed: nutritional deficiencies; fatty degeneration of liver; maternal, fetal, placental and post natal aspects of perinatal mortality; localized latent infection; study of infective and parasitic agents in autopsy; congenital anomalies in reference to autopsy; hemolytic disease and jaundice of the newborn; immunologic capacity against infection; important specific bacterial and viral infections; concept of multi-causality in mortality.

1.3 Other activities

Conferences on selected topics were delivered to the group by invited local scientists or by members of the group. Most of the pathologists brought interesting material to be presented or to be reviewed by the group. Important doubts were solved. The group visited the Butantão Institute and the Institute of Tropical Medicine of São Paulo. During the workshop two meetings for evaluation of activities and for recommendations were held. Provisional results of the Investigation of the project in São Paulo were presented by the principal collaborator, Dr. Laurenti.

2. Conclusions and recommendations

At the end of the workshop, the group arrived at the following conclusions:

2.1 The main pathological conditions are rather similar in the Latin American countries. However, important variations may exist and exchange of information is required. The exchange of experience through activities such as this workshop are important mechanisms for this purpose.

2.2 The protocol used during the workshop appeared adequate and its adoption is recommended.

2.3 It seems evident that the use of complete autopsies adds considerably to the knowledge of multiple causes of death.

2.4 This workshop was very useful to the pathologists involved in the Inter-American Investigation of Mortality in Childhood. The group formulated the following recommendations:

- 2.4.1 Workshops such as this should be repeated, following a similar orientation to the one given in São Paulo.
- 2.4.2 Promote training of junior pathologists (with at least one year of residency) in pediatric pathology at a Latin American Center of Pathology during a period of at least six months.
- 2.4.3 Provide pediatric pathologists with facilities to refresh specific aspects in pediatric pathology in specialized centers.
- 2.4.4 The exchange of experience and information could be implemented through the suggested workshop or through annual or bi-annual meetings in one pathology service. The Congress of Latin American Society of Pathology or the meeting of the American Academy of Pathology could also serve this purpose.

On his return, Dr. Roger Coté, Chairman of the Department of Pathology, School of Medicine, University of Sherbrooke, Province of Quebec, Canada, has enquired about the possibility of sending residents of pathology from Sherbrooke to Latin American Centers. He believes that a rotation through one of these centers would greatly improve their experience.

List of Participants

Dr. Hernando Espitia	Cali, Colombia
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Dr. Magali Bueno de Araujo	Ribeirão Preto, Brazil
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