

The pivotal role of Rotary in eradicating polio

OCTOBER 24TH



"Hope lies in dreams, in imagination, and in the courage of those who dare to make dreams into reality." – Jonas Salk

What would you do... if it was your child?

WORLD POLIO DAY

**END
POLIO
NOW**



TAKE ACTION: Join In, Speak Out, Donate

World Polio Day is celebrated on October 24 every year. World Polio Day is a significant annually-celebrated event to develop increased awareness about polio and to campaign for eradication of this disease. Polio usually targets children below the age of five.

The pivotal role of Rotary in eradicating polio



The birth of Rotary.

Rotary was founded, in 1905, by four people in Chicago, who met for fellowship in each other's office, each week, in rotation (hence Rotary.) They sought opportunities to apply their personal business skills to envisage, plan, and complete projects to benefit the community.

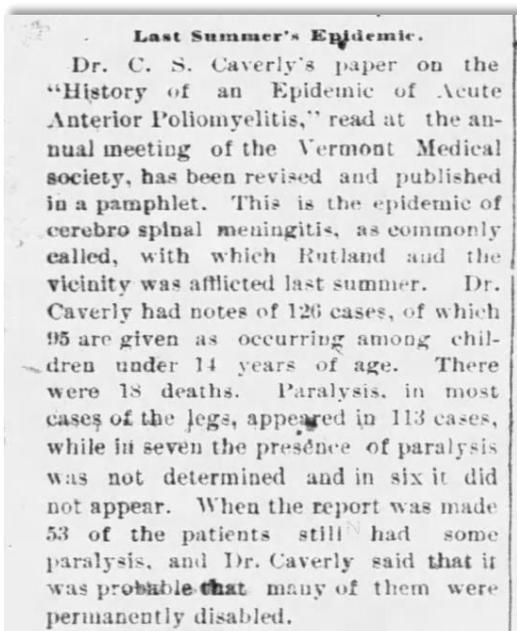
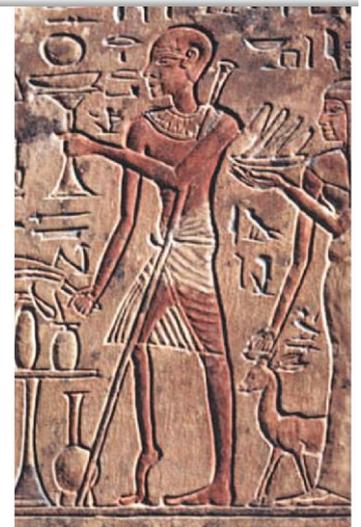
By year end 1905, their number had risen to 90.

In 1917, the Rotary Foundation was established: a charitable Trust to fund the projects that would be undertaken.

By 1955, Rotary had become an international organisation, with 10,000 clubs supported by 400,000 members spread throughout the world. A humanitarian organisation with the will to solve problems for mankind, and a budget, supported by the Foundation Trust, equal to that of a top nation.

Spasmodic cases of polio have probably occurred over the centuries, but the re-emergence in the U.S. in Vermont in 1894, saw 18 deaths and 132 paralysed. In 1908, polio was identified as highly contagious with the capability of spreading rapidly.

Polio has been around for more than 3,500 years. There is evidence from skeletons and sculptures that the ancient Egyptians were affected.



The resurgence of polio in 20th century U.S.A.

As outbreaks occurred, e.g. 1916 in New York City, more than 2,000 died and thousands were paralysed. These outbreaks struck fear into the population. It became apparent there was no cure. A vaccine to establish immunity would offer escape from the virus.

As efforts to develop a vaccine began, the iron lung to support breathing for those whose breathing tract was paralysed, and callipers for those whose limbs were wasted, offered meagre support.

FEARS PARALYSIS WILL FLARE AGAIN
 Deputy Health Commissioner Sees Peril in Return of Children Now Away.
ALL PARENTS ARE WARNED
 Believes Many, Before Unexposed, Will Get Disease on Coming to City.
SLIGHT INCREASE IN CASES
 Day's New Victims Number Nine, More Than on Friday—36 Die, Four More Than Day Before.

August 20, 1916

There was a slight advance in the number of new cases of infantile paralysis yesterday over the number on each of the several days preceding. The total of cases to date was carried above 7,000. Health Commissioner Emerson, however, saw no reason for discouragement, and was especially pleased with the continued evidence that the epidemic was "burning itself out" in Brooklyn and Richmond.

The advance in new cases was confined to Manhattan, Queens, and the Bronx, where the disease has been most stubborn for several weeks, but the fact that the increase in those boroughs was comparatively moderate tended to support the belief of the authorities that, even there, the epidemic was yielding to control.

In the city as a whole there were 912 new cases in the week ending on July 29, 1,117 in the week ending on Aug. 5, 1,123 in the week ending on Aug. 12, and 912 in the week ending yesterday.

NEW CASES AND DEATHS

Names and Addresses of the Latest Victims of Paralysis.

The following names and addresses of new cases of infantile paralysis and of deaths were made public yesterday by the Department of Health:

NEW CASES—MANHATTAN.
 Sol Grunberg, 157 Orchard St.
 Ezra S. Stalatt, 122 Madison St.
 Alie Schvartz, 142 Madison St.
 Julia Liberman, 229 Oxford St.
 Julius Malefagi, 70 Orchard St.
 John Kurland, 2 Mulberry St.
 Marie Horne, 25 James St.

Borough	Deaths		New Cases	
	Per. Yester.	Per. Yester.	Per. Yester.	Per. Yester.
Manhattan	17	12	44	51
Brooklyn	6	15	48	45
Bronx	3	8	12	12
Queens	7	4	23	25
Richmond	3	1	5	—
Totals	36	38	123	134
Total of deaths to date				1,897
Total of cases to date				7,992



Following years of research, it was found that polio is caused by a virus, it is transmitted in sewage, transferred by touch, and is more virulent in summer warmth. The improvements in sanitation, as the 20th century approached, served to reduce transmission.

However, in 1952, the US suffered a major polio epidemic, affecting 57, 628 people, of whom 3,145 died and 21,269 suffered disabling paralysis.



In 1955, Jonas Salk developed a vaccine administered by injection, but in 1960, Albert Sabin developed an oral vaccine. From 1960 through to 1979, the U.S. provided vaccine to all its citizens, and the US finally became polio-free.



As the U.S. concentrated on bringing the vaccine to its citizens, Rotary became involved in taking the vaccine to other, poorer parts of the world. So, in 1979, just as the U.S. was declared polio-free, Rotary International that had been working with the Ministry of Health for the Philippines, committed to a joint, multiyear effort in the Philippines, to immunise six million children, against polio, at a cost of about \$760 000.

The success of this project in 1985, led Rotary to embrace the eradication of polio throughout the world as a top priority and launched Polio Plus as their campaign to set the ball rolling. At that time there were 350,000 cases of polio reported annually.

The eradication of polio is one of Rotary's longest standing and most significant efforts. Along with our partners, Rotary has helped immunise more than 2.5 billion children against polio in 122 countries. We have reduced polio cases by 99.9 percent worldwide and we won't stop until we end the disease for good.

Rotary has mobilised a legion of volunteers who are providing support during vaccination campaigns, mobilising their communities for polio eradication activities, raising funds and awareness for polio eradication, and advocating for the cause with government officials. More than one million Rotarians worldwide have contributed toward the success of the polio eradication effort.

Some of the major achievements so far.

Rotary provides grant funding to WHO and UNICEF as part of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative for the following activities:

- Technical assistance including salaries for technical advisors.
- Operational support to ensure the vaccine reaches all children; including stipends for the millions of volunteers who administer the vaccine and perform house-to-house follow-up visits.
- Surveillance for disease detection, including the polio laboratory network.
- Social mobilisation to raise awareness of the vaccination campaigns and the benefits of immunisation.
- Research into new products and approaches to facilitate eradication
- Transition planning to ensure the orderly transition of polio immunisation activities to routine immunisation following the eradication of polio.
- To date, 122 countries around the world have benefited from PolioPlus grants. From the launch of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, more than 17.4 million people, mainly in the developing world, who would otherwise have been paralysed, are walking because they have been immunised against polio. More than 650,000 paralysing cases of polio are now prevented every year. Since 1988, more than 2.5 billion children have received oral polio vaccine. By 2017, more than 430 million children had been vaccinated in 39 countries using almost two billion doses of oral polio vaccine.

By the time the world is certified polio-free, Rotary's contributions to the global polio eradication effort will exceed US\$2.2 billion, including US\$985 million in matching funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Rotary's contribution to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative since 1988 accounts for nearly 14% of all contributions through June 2017 and represents approximately 42% of private sector contributions. Rotary is the leading non-governmental voluntary organisation contributor to the GPEI.

In 1988, 10% of the world's children lived in polio-free countries; by 2016, over 95% were living in polio-free countries. The number of polio cases has declined by more than 99.9% from over 350,000 in 1985 to just 22 in 2017. Since 1988, the number of polio endemic countries declined from over 125 countries to just two in 2020 (Pakistan and Afghanistan).