



PERGAMON



Muscle news around the world

A new Institute for Neuromuscular Research in Sydney, Australia

Kathryn N. North*

Institute for Neuromuscular Research, Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children, Hawkesbury Road, Westmead, Sydney, NSW 2145, Australia

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The New Children's Hospital

A scientific meeting entitled 'Recent Advances in the Diagnosis and Management of Neuromuscular Disorders' was held in Sydney, Australia on 9th May, 2000. The meeting was held to mark the opening of the new Institute for Neuromuscular Research, based at the Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children (also known as The Children's Hospital at Westmead), which is closely affiliated with the University of Sydney.

The scientific meeting featured two distinguished international speakers, Professor Victor Dubowitz, Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics at the Hammersmith Hospital in London and Dr Jack Griffin, Professor of Neurology at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and immediate Past-President of the Peripheral Nerve Society. In addition, the leading clinicians

and scientists in the field of neuromuscular disorders from around Australia participated in the program, which covered the most recent and exciting developments in the field of neuromuscular disease.

The day's presentations comprised the following:

Peter Procopis and Robert Ouvrier

Welcome and opening remarks

Victor Dubowitz, Imperial College School of Medicine, London: Therapeutic possibilities in muscular dystrophy: the hope vs. the hype

Nigel Laing, Perth Neuromuscular Institute, University of Western Australia: Congenital myopathies

Lloyd Shield, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne: Clinical clues and pitfalls in the diagnosis of neuromuscular disorders

Graeme Morgan, Sydney Children's Hospital: Practical management of patients with muscular dystrophy

Kathryn North, Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children/ University of Sydney:

What's new in the world of muscle disease?

Edward Byrne, Melbourne Neuromuscular Institute: Mitochondrial cytopathies

Jack Griffin, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore: Guillain–Barre syndrome: lessons from the developing world

Robert Ouvrier, Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children/ University of Sydney:

30 year-experience of nerve biopsies in childhood: molecular genetic correlation

John Pollard, University of Sydney:

Diagnosis and management of treatable neuropathies

Kathryn North, Closing remarks

The scientific meeting was followed by an evening reception at Government House. The Patron of the Institute, the Governor of New South Wales, His Excellency, the Honorable Gordon Samuels, spoke about the importance of research to find better treatments for neuromuscular disor-

* Tel.: +61-2-9845-3011; fax: +61-2-9845-3082.

E-mail address: kathryn@nch.edu.au (K.N. North).

ders of children. He then formally declared the opening of the Institute.

About the Institute: The Director of the Institute, Professor **Robert Ouvrier**, has been actively involved in research on peripheral neuropathies for the past 25 years, and has written the only text book on these disorders in children, in collaboration with Professors James McLeod and John Pollard of the Department of Neurology of the University of Sydney. He has retained a long association with the INSERM research group at the Robert Debre Hospital in Paris.

The Deputy Director, Associate Professor **Kathryn North**, developed her interest in the molecular genetics of human skeletal muscle at Boston Childrens' Hospital, and in 1995, returned to Sydney as the first recipient of the Career Development Award for Research. She is member of the ENMC International Consortium for Nemaline Myopathy, and leads the laboratory-based research team based at The

Children's Hospital. The Institute's Research Laboratory currently has eight professional scientists and graduate students dedicated to full time research.

Both Ouvrier and North have academic appointments at the University of Sydney and work closely with the University of Sydney Neurology laboratory. The Institute is closely linked with the Clinical Neuromuscular Service based at the Children's Hospital at Westmead and run by Associate Professor North.

The Institute aims to provide a synthesis of clinical and scientific research into childhood neuromuscular disorders, and to promote sharing and advancement of medical and scientific knowledge. Robert Ouvrier and Kathryn North have already established strong collaborative links with scientists in the USA, England and France. The Institute also proposes to host national and international scientific meetings on a regular basis.

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