



IRISH **D**ENTAL **H**EALTH **F**OUNDATION

DIRECTORS' REPORT



D. Sadlier, Executive Director



J. Walsh, Dental Director

The rapid growth in demand for services by the public in recent years on the Foundation together with the challenge of communicating our messages effectively have set the agenda for the Irish Dental Health Foundation's development proposals "Oral Health Education and Promotion in Ireland – a Five Year National Strategy". The Foundation presented this document to the Department of Health in November 1990. The work of the Foundation is integral to the achievement of national oral health goals and to the implementation of oral disease prevention programmes at a local level. The Foundation's strategic plan is to ensure that by the year 2000 the people of Ireland will be more knowledgeable, better motivated and more capable of acquiring and maintaining good oral health. In particular, the Foundation has recognised that if oral health promotion is to be effective it must be based on thorough understanding of the public's needs and be undertaken in partnership with others.

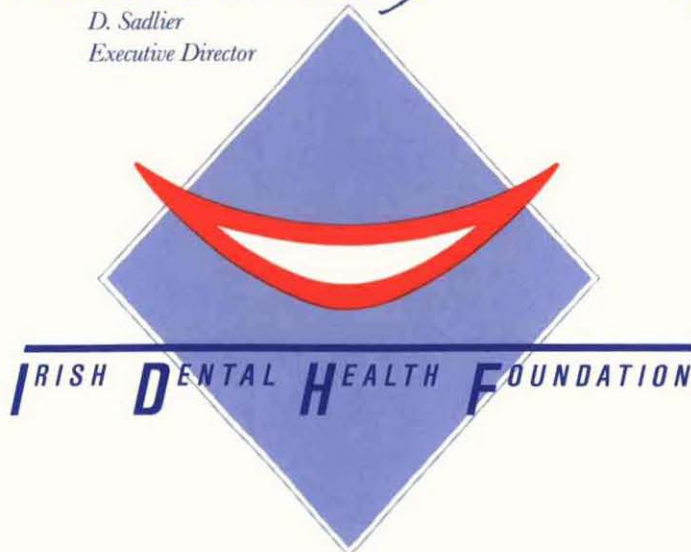
Implementation of this strategy will require a firm financial commitment by the Government which, in the longterm, can make a major contribution to the prevention of oral disease and the promotion of a healthier lifestyle.

It is appropriate to acknowledge and record the Foundation's thanks to the Minister for Health, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon, TD.

A special mention is due to Dr. Seamus O'Hickey, the Minister's Chief Dental Advisor for his guidance and assistance.

D. Sadlier
Executive Director

J. Walsh
Dental Director





CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Foundation since its establishment in 1978 as a charitable trust, continuously contributes to improving the dental health of the Irish population. Our activities have improved the awareness of the public's understanding of the value of a healthy mouth, especially amongst the very young, their parents and teachers.

Although the main emphasis of our work centres on public and professional education, we have been consulted by many companies and individuals in their own areas of dental professional programmes and have assisted them in such areas as project design and new product introductions to the Irish market.

This publication illustrates the valuable contribution made by the many individuals and groups formally associated with the Foundation. The co-operation of Government, Commerce, Industry, other bodies and organisations has also greatly enhanced our work. We are fortunate in having a dedicated staff whose commitment to dental health promotion has largely contributed to the successful development and the implementation of many programmes and projects undertaken by the Foundation.

Prevention is the primary goal of the Irish Dental Health Foundation and together with our voluntary team we will continue to further the Foundation's aims through research, education and community services.

L. O'Flynn

D. O'Flynn
Chairman



A REPORT FOR THE '90S

CREATING A FAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR ORAL HEALTH



Government Policy on Health Promotion

The Foundation gives a very high priority to legislative and policy matters which may influence or shape the oral health status of Irish people.

Since the establishment of a new health promotion framework, by the Department of Health in 1987, the Foundation has worked closely with the Health Promotion Unit. We are currently contributing to policy development initiatives in the areas of nutrition and alcohol use by the Advisory Council on Health Promotion.

HEALTH PROMOTION UNIT

Department of Health

Promotion Framework for Action which will soon be launched by the Minister for Health. The Foundation is currently liaising with the sub-committee on nutrition and within the context of this five year framework, preventative measures for dental health can now be addressed.

We have welcomed this development as it is now clearly established that dental decay is principally a disease of dietary origin. It is also recognised that any further significant reduction in dental decay levels will depend on reducing the amount and the frequency of sugar consumption in the community.

Nutrition

The Health Promotion Unit in the Department of Health has prepared a Nutrition Health



E.C. School Milk Scheme

An EC School Milk Scheme is available to all schoolgoers between the ages of four and eighteen, enabling all students in both primary and secondary school to receive a small carton of milk in school each day.

A dramatic reduction in its popularity in recent years, with only one in every five children drinking milk, has meant that only £2 million of a potential £10 million EC subsidy is being spent. We are now working with the industry to promote the scheme, based on the important nutritional elements of milk and their benefits to dental health.



Alcohol

A submission has been made to the Advisory Council on Health Promotion, which is currently developing a national policy on alcohol. Alcohol has been causally linked to cancer of the mouth, pharynx, larynx, oesophagus and liver. Alcoholic beverages have thus been classified as carcinogenic to humans. Smokers who drink are at much greater risk because alcohol has a multiplicative effect in relation to cigarette smoking.



Sugar Free Medicines

The Foundation, with the co-operation of the National Drugs Advisory Board, have compiled an initial listing of sugar-free medicines to assist in the prevention of dental decay amongst children who are medically compromised. "Medication Caries" is the term used to describe the decay occurring as a result of the long-term use of syrup-based oral medication.

IRISH DENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

CREATING A FAVOURABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR ORAL HEALTH

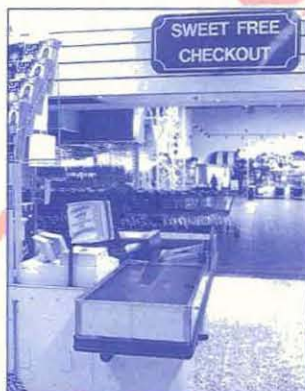
We welcome the support of The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland who will assist in the promotion of Sugar-Free Medicines amongst the Medical and Pharmaceutical professions. A recent Irish survey on the sugar content of oral medicines, conducted by Francis J. Bonner BSc. (Pharm.), was published in The Irish Pharmacy Journal, January 1991. The survey included a reasonably comprehensive guide to the content of sugar (sucrose) and/or other sweeteners per 5ml (liquid formulations) and per dosage unit (sachets, dispersible tablets, lozenges, pastilles etc.) for the various relevant proprietary formulations of drugs used both in general and paediatric medicine.



The Retail Food Industry

The phased introduction of optional SWEET FREE check-outs in the nationwide Quinnsworth supermarket chain, is the result of much welcomed co-operation between the Foundation and the supermarket industry in Ireland.

The Foundation's first major conference on Oral Health Promotion in 1989 (sponsored by Gibbs Dental Division) had, amongst its speakers, Maurice Pratt, Deputy Marketing Director of the Quinnsworth Group, whose presentation, "Consumer Trends Towards a Healthier Lifestyle", added a new dimension to how consumer behaviour can act as a valuable health indicator for those concerned with the promotion of oral health.



Programmes with Health Professionals

Lectures are provided, on a bi-annual basis, for undergraduate nurse training programmes in teaching hospitals in the Dublin region. The co-

ordinating centres are The Mater Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital and St. James's Hospital. The lectures, given by Dr. Liam Convery and Dr. David Clarke, cover the understanding of the scientific basis of dental health education and how the role of the hospital or community nurse may influence oral health behaviour.

This programme is supported by Gibbs Dental Division, Ireland. Lectures for the disabled, in addition to lectures for psychiatric and geriatric nurses, are also a feature of our services.



Training Support

The Institute of Nutrition, Trinity College - The Diploma Course in Public Health Nursing, University College Dublin - The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland - and The School of Dental Science TCD, are among the various bodies to which the Foundation provided specific lectures and tutorials for their students in 1990.



Seminars for the Health Boards

Nutrition Seminars for Dental and Medical professionals were held in the Eastern, South-Eastern and Midland Health Board regions, between October and December 1990. Ms. Nuala Shanley, Nutritionist Advisor to the National Dairy Council and Mrs. Deirdre Sadlier, Executive Director of the Foundation, were speakers. The topics focused on the results of the 1990 National Nutrition Survey and the COMA Report 1989 (Committee on Medical Aspects of food policy).

'Nutrition and Dental Health', a fact sheet written by Ms. Shanley with the assistance of Dr. Helen Whelton and Mrs. Deirdre Sadlier, was issued to all dental, medical and allied health professionals earlier in the year. The Seminars will continue during 1991.



HEALTH THROUGH ORAL HEALTH



Europe against Cancer

The Foundation is actively supporting the Europe against Cancer target of a 15% reduction in cancer deaths by the year 2000.

Tobacco and alcohol are, without doubt, at the origin of almost a third of all cancers in Europe. We have developed an alliance with the Irish Cancer Society, based on the shared concerns of both the medical and dental professions.

The programme covers four areas: Cancer prevention, Health information and education, Training of health personnel and Cancer research.

Already a number of activities are operational and have the support and co-operation of the major bodies within the dental profession. These include:

- * A Health Promotion Campaign for children delivered by the Community Dental Services.
- * A survey of the smoking habits and attitudes to tobacco products amongst the Dental profession. This will form the basis for dentists' participation in health promotion programmes with patients.
- * A workshop on Oral Cancer and Pre-Cancer co-ordinated by Dr. Leo Heslin, Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. The workshop will lead to a report on the



disease and indicate possible future action in this area for the dental and medical professions.



Smoking Habits of Irish Dentists

Only one Irish dentist in seven is a smoker but over half are former smokers. The Irish Cancer Society

and the Irish Dental Health Foundation contacted every dentist in practice to find out their views on smoking as a prelude to an anti-smoking programme run by Health Board dental surgeons for national school children. The study revealed changing patterns in dentists' smoking habits and attitudes.

The dentists surveyed are very aware of the risks of mouth cancer from smoking and alcohol. Most are anxious to participate in programmes to educate patients in healthy lifestyles. Dentists feel that taxes on tobacco should be much higher and should go partly to fund anti-smoking preventive measures. They also believe that all advertising of tobacco should be banned, as should sponsorship of sporting events by the tobacco industry. Most dentists also support a ban on duty free sales of tobacco.

The Minister for Health, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon T.D., announced the results of the survey during the launch of "National No Smoking Day", on the 14th February 1991 at the Mansion House in Dublin.

The study was carried out by the Irish Dental Health Foundation's Scientific Advisor on Oral Cancer, Dr. Bernard McCartan of Trinity College.



National No Smoking Day

Left to Right: Dr. Noel Walsh, President, Irish Dental Association, Mr. Dermot O'Flynn, Chairman, I.D.H.F., Lord Mayor of Dublin, Michael Donnelly, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon, T.D. Minister for Health, Dr. Colm O'Sullivan, President, Dental Council, Dr. Bernard McCartan, Scientific Advisor, I.D.H.F., Dr. John Murphy, Chairman of Executive Committee, I.C.S.



HEALTH THROUGH ORAL HEALTH



Community Action Towards Health

One of the Foundation's most important activities is its involvement with the Kilkenny Health Project, a community research and demonstration programme for the prevention of coronary heart disease amongst the population of Kilkenny.



COLGATE-PALMOLIVE IRELAND

A major grant from Colgate-Palmolive, Ireland made possible the integration of an oral health component, based on the common risk factors of dental and coronary heart disease: i.e. Diet, Alcohol, Tobacco. The Kilkenny Health Project team, Kilkenny dentists and The School of Dental Science, Trinity College, designed a programme based on a three stage theoretical model, as suggested by the World Health Organisation.

KILKENNY HEALTH PROJECT

A local dental co-ordinator worked largely with schools and centres for the disabled.

The Kilkenny Integrated Oral Health Project is one of few such programmes globally. International awareness of it was heightened during the 'International Association for Dental Research' World Conference 1989, held in Dublin. This led to a presentation by Mrs. Sadlier, (Executive Director) to the Annual Scientific Conference of the Finnish Dental Society, in March 1990.

The experience gained in Kilkenny will be of immense value in the Foundation's approach to developing programmes which involve a broad, multisectoral approach. The Foundation is extremely grateful to Dr. Emer Shelly, Project Leader and her team, for their interest and support in facilitating this feasibility project.

DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS



The need to develop and co-ordinate comprehensive dental health education programmes in schools with the Health Promotion Unit at the Department of Health, is at the forefront of the Irish Dental

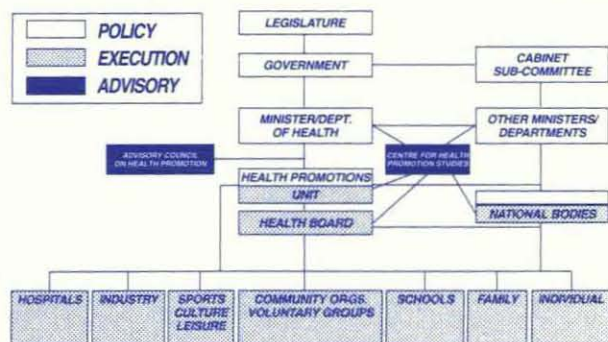
Health Foundation's agenda.

It is envisaged that a working group, representing the community dental services, the Health Promotion Unit and the Foundation, will establish a framework that will oversee the development, distribution and evaluation of dental health programmes and other materials for school children.

The enthusiasm and initiative of many Community Dental Officers have been frustrated and hampered in the past, by the lack of suitable materials. Now there is also a growing interest amongst teachers who want to accommodate dental health activities in their curriculum.

The Foundation has responded to such demands with its own limited resources, together with the valuable teaching materials made available by commercial agencies. Most widely distributed is

HEALTH PROMOTION - A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK



Colgate-Palmolive's "Gleam Team" - A dental health programme aimed at 6-7 year olds. A new format of the programme for an older age group is scheduled for September 1991. The programme's distribution has been co-ordinated by the Principal Dental Officers for the last five years.

IRISH DENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

In March of this year, Crest (A division of Procter and Gamble) introduced their new schools programme. It has been specifically designed to give "Infant" teachers maximum possible help in presenting a project on dental health. Mindful of the many demands being made on teachers, it is presented in a 'teacher-friendly' format that is straightforward and easy to use. This programme has been enthusiastically received by teachers in the Dublin area and it will be available nationally from September 1991.



Health Promotion Programmes

The Foundation plays a central role as oral health advisor to a number of health education programmes being piloted in different regions of the country. We have contributed to workshops and induction courses for teachers involved in the projects.

- * Learning for Life - a Health Education/Education for life project developed by Co. Tipperary (NR) VEC, the Mid-Western Health Board and the former Health Education Bureau.
- * Health Education for Primary Schools - a pilot programme currently in operation in the Mid-Western Health Board and supported by the Health Promotion Unit.
- * Grow in Health - a Primary Health Education programme developed by the Brothers of Charity Services and the Southern Health Board. It is designed for use with 10-12 year old pupils in primary schools and 13-16 year old pupils in special schools.
- * The Kilkenny Health Project - Schools Health programme which forms one element of the project's activities, aimed at improving the health and lifestyle of the people of Kilkenny.



A Programme for Disadvantaged Children

The Minister for Education launched a major home/school liaison project in 1990, aimed at primary school pupils in identifiable areas of socio-economic disadvantage. This is a very welcome

development that allows for the establishment of an appropriate framework to address the dental health education needs of these children in conjunction with the overall aims of the project.

A national steering committee is directing the progress of the project in seven "Cluster" centres: outer North Dublin, inner North Dublin, inner South Dublin, the West Tallaght area of Dublin, the Clondalkin area of Dublin, Cork and Limerick.

A team of 30 local co-ordinators, under the leadership of a national co-ordinator, will act as full-time home/school/community liaison co-ordinators on a year-to-year basis, for a period of three years. Their objective is to reinforce the aspect of co-operation between home, school and community in the educative process.

Evaluation consultants to the project are the Educational Research Centre at St. Patrick's College in Dublin and a senior researcher in the Economics and Social Research Institute.

The development of a suitable dental health component will be carried out in consultation with the Community Dental Officers.



Schools Educational Materials

The Foundation provides assistance to An Gúm, the publications section of the Department of Education. To date, we have contributed to the content of the Junior Cycle Home Economics Section.

- * A submission has also been made to the Primary School Curriculum and Examinations Board, concerning the contents of some books and aspects of oral health. This submission was based on a survey of a range of reading books available for use in the primary school curriculum. 90% of the food items mentioned are portrayed as snack type food items, which are known to be harmful to oral health. There is also a frequent portrayal of reward systems using similar food items.



Teacher Training Colleges

The need to develop a sustained educational input into the Teacher Training Colleges Curriculum is a crucial factor in the future success of

DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

school based dental health education, together with the provision of on-going courses and workshops for qualified teachers throughout schools nationally.

To date, the Foundation has provided ad hoc support at both these levels. This aspect is a key issue and will be addressed in our overall strategy for Schools Dental Health Education Development.



Dental Health Educators

The Foundation is working closely with the recently appointed team of Dental Health Educators in the Eastern Health Board Region. The team is effectively delivering dental health education programmes throughout national schools.



Left to right: Dr. Seamus O'Hickey, Chief Dental Officer, Department of Health; Minister for Health, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon; Dr. Bernard McCartan, Scientific Advisor, I.D.H.F.; Dr. Gerard Fitzgerald, Community Dental Services, and Mr. Tom Hudson, Chief Executive Officer, Irish Cancer Society.



"It's Cool to be Healthy"

The Minister for Health, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon, launched this campaign (developed jointly with the Irish Cancer Society), during European week of Information on Cancer, 8th - 12th of October 1990. The programme, which is delivered by the Community Dental Services, centres around cartoon characters Pearly White (a mischievous toothfairy) and Dick Gumshoe (a super-cool detective). Comics and posters target the children at an age when they are most likely to experiment with cigarettes and alcohol. Childrens favourites 'Zig and Zag', from TV's Network Two, favoured the campaign on National No Smoking Day.



"Time to Care for your Teeth"

A colourful and informative educational wallchart was developed with Crest for children aged between five and seven years. It tells the story of tooth eruption and development as well as the importance of healthy teeth and gums. It was designed with special appeal for youngsters. All national schools and Healthboard dental clinics received copies.



"Happiness is a Healthy Smile"

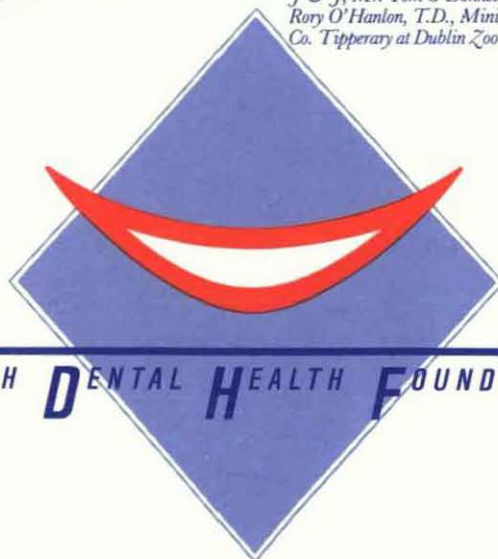
The importance of Gum Health was the focus of a lively educational wallchart, developed by Johnson & Johnson for 9-12 year olds. Teachers' notes accompanied the posters which reached all 3,500 national schools. A competition element, asking children to design Dental Health projects, attracted a large number of entries. The winning entry, from the Ursuline Convent Thurles, Co. Tipperary, was presented with a £1000 worth of audio-visual equipment, while the runners up from Brown Knowle, Co. Donegal, received a cheque for £500.

The Minister for Health, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon, awarded the prizes at a special ceremony in Dublin Zoo, in December 1990.



Johnson & Johnson Ireland Ltd. Schools Dental Health Competition.

Left to right: Ms. Deirdre Sadlier, Executive Director, I.D.H.F., Mr. Eunan Friel, Product Manager, J & J, Ms. Darina Walsh, Marketing Manager, J & J, Mr. Tom O'Donnell, Managing Director, J & J, pictured with Dr. Rory O'Hanlon, T.D., Minister for Health and the Ursuline Convent, Thurles, Co. Tipperary at Dublin Zoo.



IRISH DENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

DENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

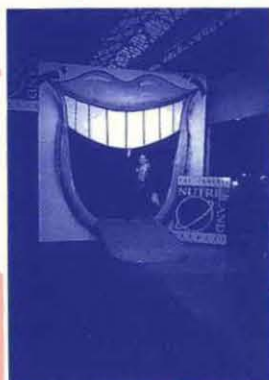


"Kellogg's Physical Education Awards"

The Kellogg's Physical Education Awards take place every year at the R.D.S. in Dublin. More than 3000 second level students, from all parts of Ireland, participate in the event over a three day period.

"Nutriland" is an area within the Exhibition devised to encourage healthy lifestyles amongst teenagers and includes stands from the Irish Dental Health Foundation, The Irish Cancer Society, The Irish Nutrition and Dietitians Institute, the C.B.F. and The National Dairy Council.

The Mentadent Preventative Dental Care Team supported the Foundation this year. The message focused on "Teeth and Gum Fitness". In 1990, the Foundation's emphasis centred on "Healthy Eating and Oral Health" and was supported by dental students and Colgate-Palmolive Ireland.



Kellogg's Physical Education Awards

Left to Right: Ms. Bernadette Flanagan, Gibbs Dental Division, Ms. Deirdre Sadlier, Executive Director, I.D.H.F., Ms. Rosemarie Gantly, Gibbs Dental Division.



Aer Lingus Young Scientist of the Year Exhibition

Once again, this major national exhibition attracted numerous entries on aspects relating to oral health. The Foundation lends special support to the development of these projects which are judged as part of the competition's Biology section.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONS



The Foundation has enjoyed a highly successful relationship with the media.

Being recognised as a leading independent and authoritative source has enabled us to become the primary contact for the media. All promotional campaigns this year received key television and radio slots.

T.V.

We are particularly pleased to have worked with RTE's CHECK-UP and LIVE AT THREE programmes on a number of topics and, through them, to have reached peak adult viewing audiences. Mouthguard



protection and gum health have also featured on Network Two's Jo Maxi, a teenage show.

Zig and Zag's 'Smile of the Week' Award, now entering its fourth year, remains our most successful children's promotion to date. Zig and Zag and Ray Darcy promote the Foundation's dental health message reaching almost one million children.



IRISH DENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONS

The weekly award winner receives a "Licensed to Smile" certificate, a Colgate Junior Oral Care Kit and the Colgate Crusaders Board Game. A special event to announce the national winner was held in May 1991.

RADIO - RTE1, 2FM, 98FM, Century 100 & Capital 104FM.

Our media spokespersons discussed topics on the Marianne Finucane Show, Morning Ireland and the Gerry Ryan Show, concentrating on advances in preventative dentistry and the benefits of oral healthcare.

PRESS

Throughout the year, the Foundation worked with various journalists on dental health articles for national and regional newspapers as well as the country's leading women's magazines.

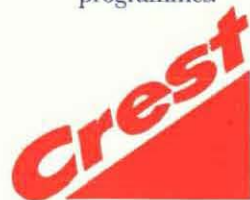


Promotional Campaigns

The Foundation was one of the many organisations that supported the Mentadent P National Gum Health Campaign, a Gibbs Dental Division Programme, supported by FDI/WHO.

The campaign promoted the benefits of gum health and gave general information on Oral Health throughout supermarket outlets nationwide.

The Mentadent Preventative Dental Care Team were available to encourage the public to seek professional help for the recognition, diagnosis, control and prevention of periodontal disease. The Team also encouraged self-awareness of periodontal disease through effective home care programmes.



Crest Gum Health Promotion

The Foundation worked closely with Crest (a division of Procter and Gamble) in the planning and co-ordination of the Crest Gum

Health Promotional Campaign. A nationwide travelling information booth was located at every major shopping centre where dental personnel promoted the importance of a proper oral hygiene routine.

"Big Cheese Smile of the Year"

A nationwide in-store competition, for the under 12s, was organised by the National Dairy Council and the Foundation. The competition attracted over 1000 entries and the winning smile was awarded a video camera. The in-store promotion centred on the benefits of cheese and dental health as part of a healthy eating plan.



"Eat For Your Teeth Week" October 1990

"Eat For Your Teeth Week" was organised jointly with the National Dairy Council. A media focused campaign promoted nutrition and dental health. Supermarket outlets provided venues for consumer information leaflets during the month of October. The event attracted widespread TV coverage.

B.L.E. Athletic/Fitness Chart

The Foundation, in association with Aragon Limited, manufacturers of 'Plac-Atac', were among the many commercial and health promotion agencies to support a Sport Athletic Chart which was designed to promote and improve the standard of athletics in Ireland.

Bord Luthchleas na hEireann is concerned with the promotion of a healthy lifestyle amongst young people.

The chart will be distributed to the principals, guidance counsellors, PE teachers and libraries of primary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, health centres, physiotherapy clinics and sports shops. In total 25,000 charts will be circulated throughout the country.

Bord Luthchleas na hEireann Athletics Sports Chart Launch.

Left to Right: Ms. Deirdre Sadlier, Executive Director, I.D.H.F., Mr. Eamonn Coughlan, former Chief Executive, Bord Luthchleas na hEireann, Ms. Thomasina Costello, Marketing Director, Aragon Limited.



MEETINGS WITH DENTAL PROFESSIONAL BODIES

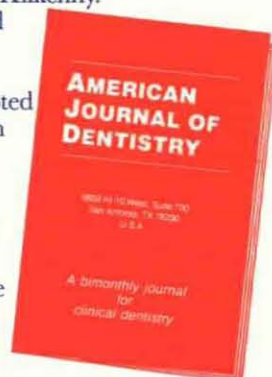


The Foundation's joint meetings were held with THE IRISH SOCIETY OF PERIODONTOLOGY, at the Cork Dental Hospital in October and with THE SOCIETY OF CHIEF AND PRINCIPAL DENTAL OFFICERS IN IRELAND in December at St. James's Hospital Postgraduate Centre, Dublin. Both meetings were sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive Ireland.

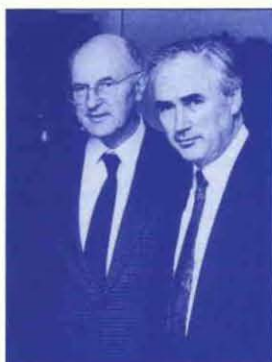
The Irish Dental Association

The Irish Dental Association Annual Scientific Conference 1990 was held in Kilkenny.

The Foundation exhibited the findings on sugar intake from the 1990 National Nutrition Survey and promoted the latest research findings on the role of Triclosan with Copolymers in dentifrices. Copies of The American Journal of Dentistry (special edition) were issued to conference delegates with the compliments of Colgate-Palmolive Ireland.



The Health Board Dental Surgeons Group — Annual Scientific Conference, Adare, Co. Limerick, 1990.



The Foundation welcomed the opportunity to promote the health promotion programme for schools developed with the Irish Cancer Society. Dr. Don Keane, former Chairman of The Society of Chief and Principal Dental Officers in Ireland, outlined the programme which was enthusiastically received by delegates.

Left to Right: Dr. Liam Convery, Dublin Dental Hospital, Dr. Don Keane, Society of Chief & Principal Dental Officers in Ireland at the Conference.

School of Dental Science, Trinity College — Community Dental Health Projects Awards.

The Foundation is one of a number of bodies involved in the judging of this annual event. Projects developed by fourth year dental undergraduates are infinitely variable and are of immense value to community oral health advancement.

Dental Seminar at Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin 9th of June 1990.

Dermot O'Flynn, Chairman of the Foundation, chaired this seminar which was organised by Dr. Colm O'Sullivan. The seminar theme addressed the needs and problems often encountered while working with critically ill children. Mr. O'Flynn is also Deputy Chairman of the Board of Our Lady's Hospital.

"Out of the Mouths"

Conference Examining the Problems of Child Dental Care - March 8th, 1991

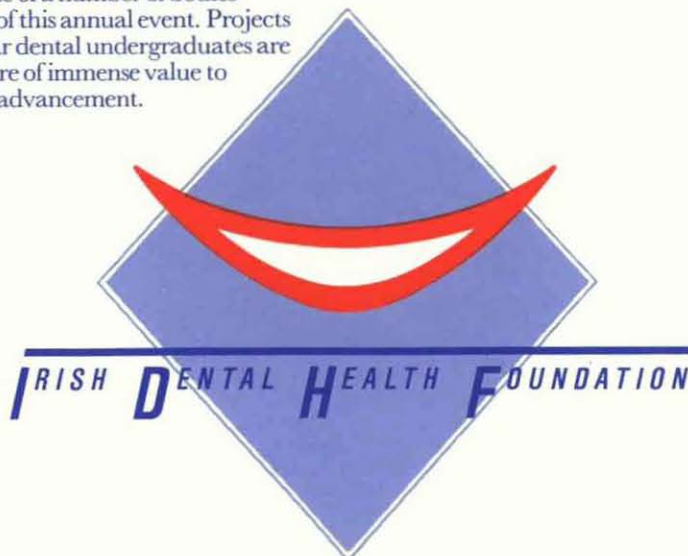
Lack of information, lack of knowledge and poor behavioural management in the home together with the need for dentists to motivate children and their parents with good oral care habits and a lack of proper appreciation of dental hygiene were found to be the major reasons for dental health problems later in life. These were the key issues addressed by the speakers at the one-day national conference presented by the Irish Dental Health Foundation (IDHF), sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive Ireland, which was held in the College of Physicians, Kildare Street, Dublin.

The IDHF feel it is essential to imbue children with good oral care habits and a proper appreciation of dental hygiene at the earliest possible stage. Preventative dentistry is now recognised as having a key role in improving dental health and in cutting the cost of expensive corrective action in adulthood. Other long term benefits of preventative dentistry include the reduction in costs to the state for routine dental care and savings in future health budgets.

The abilities in communication skills and a knowledge of the behavioural sciences are of paramount importance with children — probably the most important tools required for the attainment of oral health for children, rather than simply continuing to alleviate without preventing disease.



Left to Right: Dr. Colm Bell, President, Irish Society of Dentistry for Children, Mr. Ted Hession, Director of Operations, Colgate-Palmolive Ireland, Dr. Liam Shalloo, President, Irish Society of Periodontology, Mr. Chris Flood, T.D. Minister of State, Dept. of Health, Dr. Noel Walsh, President, Irish Dental Association.



MEETINGS WITH DENTAL PROFESSIONAL BODIES

It is important that persistent and consistent communication on a one to one basis and public communication campaigns take place to help educate the public and change existing attitudes. While the dentist is prevented from conventional advertising, there is no reason why he or she should not put some advertising techniques to beneficial use. Communication with a patient is essential, whether it is through the post or by using visual aids and demonstrations as part of the practice. A Preventative Dental Unit (PDU) in surgeries has become a popular way overseas of educating people into better maintenance of their teeth and gums. The addition of such units to Irish practices could mean the difference between a successful and a failed practice in the years ahead.



Left to Right:
Dr. Seamus O'Hickey,
Mr. Chris Flood,
Ms. Barbara Wallace,
Mr. Ian Fox.

The Health Promotion Unit in the Department of Health has prepared a Nutrition Health Promotion Framework for Action which will soon be launched. Persuasive evidence is now available to link poor nutrition to ill-health. Healthy eating habits has long been recognised as a key factor in preventing dental disease. The Department has published healthy eating guidelines and these are the cornerstone of the Nutrition Health Promotion Framework for Action. There are eight healthy eating guidelines and the one specific to dental health is that the frequency of consumption of sugary goods in the Irish diet should be reduced, particularly by children.

The need for much greater funds to help with the task of educating the public through a national communication

campaign is also obvious in the Health Service. There should be a full range of support systems for the private dentist and for the Public Dental Officer alike. Given the funds the Irish Dental Health Foundation would be well placed to implement and co-ordinate a full preventative dentistry campaign.

The Conference was opened by Minister of State at the Department of Health Mr. Chris Flood. The speakers were Dr. Elizabeth Kay of the University of Dundee who addressed the intricacies of child behaviour. The country's leading nutritionist Ursula O'Dwyer discussed the relationship between eating habits and oral health. The clinical problems of dental disease were examined by Dr. Gerry Linden of the Department of Periodontology at The Queen's University, Belfast. Barbara Wallace, former President of the PR Institute of Ireland addressed the problem of improving people's behaviour through changing attitudes. Ian Fox, former President of the Institute of Advertising Practitioners and then Managing Director of The Helme Partnership spoke on improving communications between dentists, their patients and the public at large.

The conference was supported by The Royal Academy of Medicine (Section of Odontology), The Irish Society of Dentistry for Children and The Irish Society of Periodontology.



Left to Right: Dr. Alva McDonald, Dublin Dental Hospital, Dr. Gerry Linden, Queens University Belfast, Dr. Elizabeth Kay, Dundee University.



PUBLIC INFORMATION SERVICE



Through the Information Office, the Foundation has dealt with thousands of written and telephone enquiries over the year.

The nature of the enquiries is infinitely variable, many are for specific leaflets or packs of prepared information. The Foundation aims to ensure that all requests for facts and figures from the public are answered either from stock material or by referral to specific agencies.

Enquiries come from both specialist and general audiences. A large percentage of telephone calls come from members of the public, who are looking for information to help them understand dental problems and their solutions:-

- * *Advice on overcoming fear.*
- * *Explanation of "press" articles on the latest developments in dentistry.*
- * *Cosmetic dentistry, its availability and cost in Ireland.*
- * *The effect on general health of mercury contained in fillings.*
- * *Aids and Dentistry.*



As well as enquiries to this office, we also service all enquiries about dental health made to the Department of Health, The Health Promotion Unit, The Irish Dental Association and the Dental Council.



Library Services

The Foundation's library service has a range of books and periodicals on Dental Health and related topics.

The Foundation offers to screen all materials and publications on Dental Health. We make recommendations to the library service of The Health Promotion Unit within the Department of Health and to the country's Public Library Service.

A range of dental health audio-visual aids, suitable for use by members of the public and the dental profession, is maintained. To support this information service, the Foundation has responded to over 40 requests, from all sectors of the community, to provide speakers.

Talks have been given to:

- * *SCHOOLS*
- * *SCOUTS AND GUIDES*
- * *PLAYSCHOOL GROUPS*
- * *THE IRISH COUNTRYWOMEN'S ASSOCIATION.*
- * *HOMES FOR THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED.*
- * *LADIES CLUBS*
- * *MOTHERCRAFT CLASSES*
- * *VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS*

Dental Health talks have also become a feature in the workshops provided for Dublin's inner-city disadvantaged teenagers, a project supported by the Dublin Inner-City Development Association.

Preventative Dental Care Centres in Hospitals for Sick Children

A very welcome initiative by some members of the dental profession, has been the establishment of preventative dental care services for children who are medically compromised within these hospital settings and for whom preventative dental care must rate as a priority. We have been delighted to support such programmes through the provision of Dental Education Materials and we look forward to continuing such support.

"Your Disabled Child's Dental Care"

The Health Promotion Unit, in conjunction with the Foundation, has updated and printed the booklet "Your Disabled Child's Dental Care", by Dr. John S. Walsh. Originally issued in 1983, it is aimed at parents and others caring for disabled children, and gives them the information necessary for good home preventative care. Disabled children are effected by the same dental problems as all children, the chief ones being tooth decay and gum disease.



OUR THANKS

We would like to express our appreciation to our Honorary Scientific Advisory Panel who voluntarily give their time to the Foundation's work programmes and the many international agencies, in particular Dr. K. Lester, Pro-Vice Chancellor, James Cook University, Australia, and the Australian Dental Health Foundation whose assistance we sought in organisational planning and development.

Thanks are also due to the following companies and bodies with whom we have been involved:

Aragon Limited
Colgate-Palmolive Ireland
The Community Dental Services
Crest (a division of Procter & Gamble)
The Curriculum Development Unit, T.C.D.
The Dental Council
The Dental Schools in Dublin and Cork
The Department of Health
The Eastern Health Board
The European Commission
The Faculty of Dentistry, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
Gibbs Dental Division Ireland
The Health Promotion Unit, Department of Health
The Institute of Community Health Nursing
The Irish Association of Dental Auxiliaries
The Irish Cancer Society
The Irish Dental Association

The Irish Nutritionists and Dietitians Institute
The Irish Society of Dentistry for Children
The Irish Society of Periodontology
Johnson & Johnson Ireland
The Kilkenny Health Project
The National Dairy Council
The National Drugs Advisory Board
The National Social Services Board
Oral-B
The Oral Services Research Unit, U.C.C.
The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland
The Physical Education Association
The Postgraduate Medical and Dental Board
Quinnsworth Supermarkets
R.T.E. Television and Radio
The Society of Chief and Principal Dental Officers in Ireland

PERSONNEL

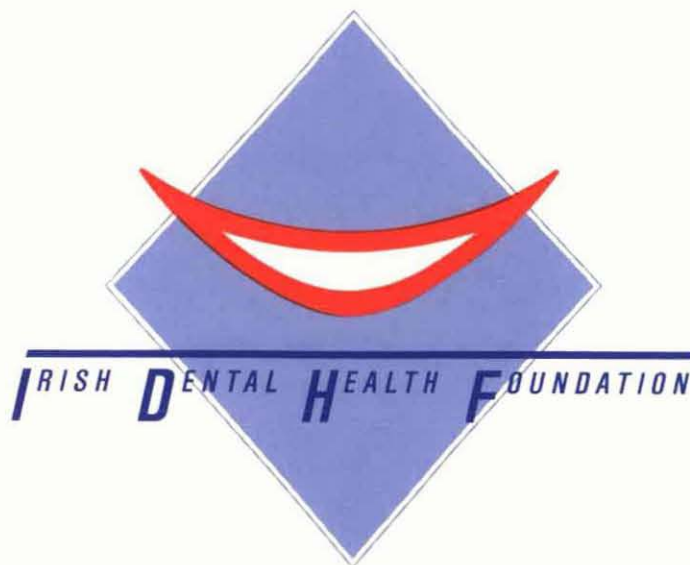
Chairman: Mr. Dermot O'Flynn M.Econ.Sc., F.P.S.I. (Trustee)
Honorary Treasurer: Dr. Joseph Moloney BDS (NUI) (Trustee)
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Dr. Finbar Harrington LDS, MGDS.
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Executive Director: Mrs. Deirdre Sadlier, Dip.D.S.A.Dip. D.H.E. R.S.H. (UK), AMPRII
Administrator: Mrs. Mary Graham.
Executive Committee: Dr. John Walsh, Dr. Don Keane, Dr. Patrick Crotty, Dr. Dymphna Daly, Dr. William Davis, Dr. Gerard Gavin.

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Dr. Seamus O'Hickey, Dr. Bernard McCartan, Dr. Helen Whelton, Dr. Liam Convery, Dr. Patrick Costello, Dr. David Clarke, Dr. Tony Connellan, Professor D. O'Mullane, Professor M. Hobdell, *Dr. John Clarkson, Dr. Stephen McDermott.

*In absentia

Report compiled by Mrs. D. Sadlier.





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