

Microscope

Winter 2004/05

Pneumococcal vaccine

The Foundation is delighted with the recent news that Government advisory body, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), has given their recommendation in principle to a new vaccination for children to protect against pneumococcal disease.

It is estimated that pneumococcal infection, which can cause meningitis, may kill between 50 and 100 children under the age of five each year.

While there are still a number of hurdles to clear before the vaccination can be incorporated into the childhood vaccine schedule, this represents a major step forward.

We will keep you informed as to the vaccine's progress.

New Trustee



A warm welcome to Margaret O'Brien who joined the charity's Board of Trustees last September.

Margaret is assistant director of nursing at St Ita's Hospital in Dublin. She has worked with the Foundation over a number of years, having become a founder member of the charity in Ireland following the death of her 17 year old daughter, Orla, from meningitis in January 1995.

Particularly active in a fundraising capacity, Margaret has run the highly successful golf classic for the last three years and has been instrumental in gathering so many Foundation runners for the annual Dublin mini marathon.

With her wealth of experience, both professional and personal, Margaret is a welcome addition to the Board.



Great Wall of China. Just one of the fundraising challenges for 2005 - you'll find more inside

From Denise Vaughan



Welcome to Microscope.

Some of you will soon be contacted by Briony, who's carrying out a mini-survey to find out more about what you want to see and read in Microscope. If you would like to feed your views in, do call Adrian Robson, the editor, on 01454 281811 or email adrianrobson@meningitis.org and he will arrange for you to be polled.

For now, we are keeping the focus on how the funds are used to carry out our charitable work - research, information for the public and health professionals, and support, and on the money we need to make those things happen.

Two new research projects have been added to the research programme. You can read more about these projects on the opposite page.

We also remain committed to providing the most up to date information possible for health professionals. That's why we are very excited by the development of our new booklet for nurses working in a community setting - *Vital Signs, Vital Issues* (see page 5).

Your contribution to our work during 2004 has been vital. A special mention is in order for all of the nurseries throughout the UK and Ireland that joined in with Make Music with Marvin (see page 6). We are delighted that this joint fund- and awareness-raising project has captured the imagination so well.

Make Music with Marvin will be back in 2005, as will that great day out for all the family – the Big Pedal. In the meantime, we hope you find something in this edition of *Microscope* which will spur you on to raise much needed funds for the charity.

On behalf of the trustees and members of the charity, I would like to congratulate Olivia Giles for her recent Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year award, and formally welcome Margaret O' Brien to our board of Trustees.

A belated happy new year to you all.

Denise Vaughan

Chief Executive

Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year

Congratulations are in order to Foundation member Olivia Giles who was awarded the well-deserved title of Volunteer Fundraiser of the Year at the Institute of Fundraising Scotland Conference 2004.



Olivia Giles (right) receiving her award with Jacqui Clark, Scotland Manager

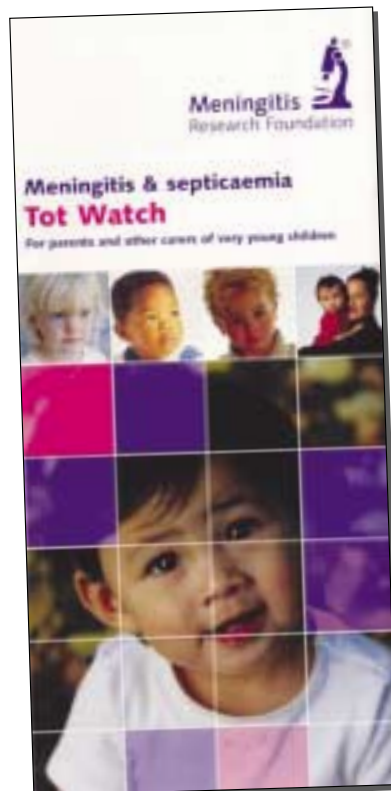
Olivia, who underwent quadruple amputations to save her life following meningococcal septicaemia, was jointly nominated by the Foundation and the Meningitis Trust for her work on the hugely successful fundraising event, Leap for Meningitis.

The event raised the incredible sum of £470,000, with the money raised going to help fund research into meningitis and septicaemia; provide support to families affected by the diseases and raise awareness of the symptoms.

Accepting the award on behalf of Olivia, Jacqui Clark, the Foundation's Manager for Scotland, praised Olivia's determination and energy, "Olivia has been an inspiration to many and has ensured that her own experience of contracting meningococcal septicaemia has been channelled positively to help prevent others going through what she did."

Early learning

Many thanks to The Early Learning Centre and their affiliate stores, Daisy and Tom.



They are displaying our *Meningitis Tot Watch* leaflets in full-length A3 picture frames in each of their mother and baby changing rooms nationally. What a fantastic way to raise awareness amongst parents and other carers of children in this susceptible age group.



New research

In the Foundation's recent autumn research grants round, two new projects were taken onto the programme. Both of them build on previous work funded by the Foundation. Further funding was also agreed for an existing project at the University of Oxford.

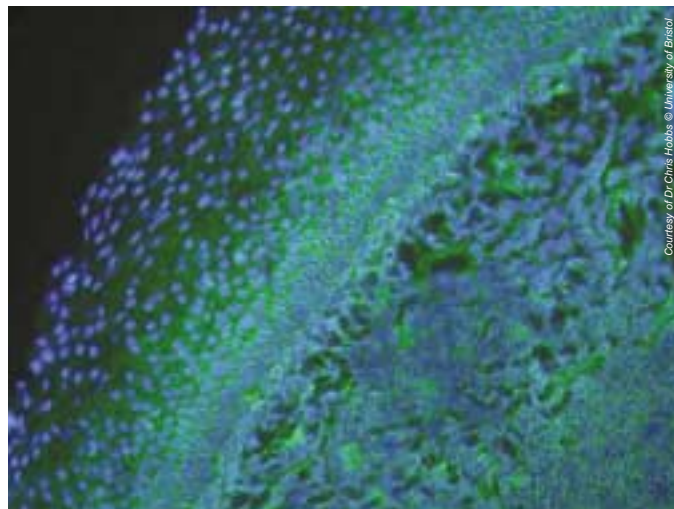
The first new project, based at the University of Bristol, follows on from the Foundation funded project, *Natural development of immunity to meningococcal bacteria*.

Natural immunity to Group B meningococcal bacteria probably develops following fleeting contact between the immune system and the meningococcal bacteria at the back of the nose and throat. The researchers have already investigated how this works by looking at human tonsils and in this project they plan to use a new device to administer an experimental MenB vaccine through the nose to adults, and then to children. This research will provide important insights into immunity against Group B meningococcal disease and help with the design of new vaccines.

The second new project is a collaboration between researchers from Imperial College, London and the Genome Institute of Singapore.

We already know that genetic factors play a role in determining why only a few people develop meningococcal disease when the large majority of the population will carry the bacteria without ever getting ill. Genetic factors may also explain how severely people who get the disease are affected.

Over the last 10 years researchers at Imperial College have developed a bank of DNA samples from people who have had meningococcal disease, many of which have been donated by members of the Foundation. Using highly sophisticated genetic analysis techniques and the DNA



Immune cells of the tonsil shown by immunofluorescent staining

samples they have collected, the researchers will identify the genes that control who gets meningococcal disease and how severely they get it. They will then go on to investigate the roles that those genes play in the development of meningococcal disease. This research could eventually help identify which of us is most susceptible to meningococcal disease, as well as identifying targets for new treatments.

Can you help?

The Centre for Appearance Research, based at the University of the West of England in Bristol, is carrying out research into how meningococcal septicaemia affects the lives of young people.

The research has a particular emphasis on appearance and body image issues. They aim to use this research to inform the care and support young people receive during and after treatment for meningococcal septicaemia in the future.

If you or your child is aged 10 to 25 years, has experienced appearance changes, such as scarring, amputation or other tissue damage, as a result of having meningococcal septicaemia within the last five years, and would be interested in taking part in this important research, please contact the researcher, Melissa Wallace, on 0117 328 3939 or email her at melissa2.wallace@uwe.ac.uk to find out more.



Scotland

With recent figures showing that meningitis and septicaemia have claimed more lives in Scotland in 2004 than in the preceding year, the need to increase awareness of the symptoms of the diseases is as vital as ever.



Barbara Weir working with students from Forfar Academy

Much of the case fatality rise in Scotland can be attributed to cases in adults. It was quite telling, therefore, that when Information and Education Officer Rili Craig recently visited a transport company in Paisley, she found that employees didn't realise that adults can be affected too.

We've mentioned before how important support from Foundation members is in raising awareness and this winter Barbara Weir has been accompanying Rili to a number of schools around the country.

Sixth year students in Girvan, Cowdenbeath and Forfar have benefited from hearing how Barbara's son, Jonathan, was taken ill with meningitis when he was a student in Glasgow and how his sister's quick action in recognising the symptoms saved his life.

Northern Ireland

Using public speaking competitions is proving a great way of engaging young people in Northern Ireland on the subject of meningitis and septicaemia.

Northern Ireland Information and Education Officer Liz Hamilton was in attendance as seventeen under sixteen year olds battled it out in last year's school's public speaking competition. The youngsters faced the daunting challenge of making an impromptu speech using the title of our most recent public awareness leaflet *Race Against Time*, the title having been suggested by the competition's adjudicator, Arthur Webb, advisor to the Belfast Education and Library Board.

The meningitis and septicaemia theme certainly brought out the best in the young competitors, resulting in many innovative and creative interpretations on the theme.

Special congratulations to Patrick Bagues, a student from Christian Brothers, Omagh, the overall winner and Peter Coulter from Ballymena Academy, the runner-up. Certificates of Achievement were given to all the students taking part along with goodie bags from Northern Bank, CCEA and O'Reilly's, The Sweet People.



Linda Hunter, teacher; Peter Coulter runner-up; Abigail Nelson highly commended; all from Ballymena Academy with Liz Hamilton

England and Wales

Much work in England and Wales has centred on extending our range of resources for health professionals.



Vital Signs - Vital Issues

Following last year's highly successful launch of a card for frontline nurses, the Foundation has been working on a resource for nurses working in a community setting.

Entitled *Vital Signs – Vital Issues*, the booklet has been written in conjunction with experts in the field and a pilot version has undergone extensive testing, particularly with nurses. We are now working on the final version and will report more in the next edition of *Microscope*.

Most students fall into the second most at risk category from meningitis and septicaemia. We were, therefore, delighted to work with Universities UK on new guidelines for dealing with cases in higher education institutions. The guidelines were published in December.

Autumn and winter see the highest number of cases of the diseases often with the peak happening around Christmas and the new year. To make sure that people didn't forget about the possibility of meningitis and septicaemia, the Foundation worked successfully to get symptoms information and our helpline number featured widely on TV and Radio over the holiday season.

Republic of Ireland

New Information and Education Officer Katie Doyle has thrown herself in at the deep end with a number of awareness talks in the last few months.

Men's Health Week at University College Dublin provided a great forum to raise awareness among the large at risk group of students that attend the college. During the week, our literature was distributed throughout the campus and Katie gave a talk in conjunction with other speakers.

Our relationship with the college continued in January when we were the charity of choice to benefit from their Agricultural Rag Week, which again provided us with a chance to reinforce the awareness message throughout the college.

The Gillian Hill Meningitis Trust showed appreciation for our work by inviting us to take part in their Awareness Night in Corduff Community Centre, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan. The Foundation also received €2000 on the night and we give our sincere thanks to the Trust and send Gillian our very best wishes in her continuing recovery.



Liz Hamilton with Paula McDade from the Ulster Chemists' Association (UCA). The UCA has recently included an awareness feature in their NI Pharmacy in Focus magazine, and worked with Sangers (NI) Ltd and A.A.H. Pharmaceuticals Ltd to get copies of Race Against Time and other awareness materials into all 600 Ulster chemists

Made music with Marvin

Making music with our friendly monster Marvin really caught the imagination of nurseries throughout the UK and Ireland.



Who's having the most fun at this Make Music event in Bristol? The Lord Mayor of Bristol or the children?



With most nurseries having held their events, figures show a rise in both the number of Make Music concerts by the under-fives and the amount of money raised.

Make Music with Marvin has proved to be a fantastic way of raising funds for the Foundation. And, in addition, it has been a great way to get our symptoms information, particularly *Meningitis Tot Watch*, to the parents and carers of the most at-risk group – the under-fives.

Many thanks to patron Victoria Beckham for all her support in promoting Make Music with Marvin 2004.



An 'abseil-ute' success! Our Northern Ireland's office's first fundraising abseil went down very well with all participants and raised over £4,000. Foundation member Ken Megaw is shown just about to get that sinking feeling



Member Robert McCallum on the summit of Ben Lomond during Munro Madness 2004. Robert raised £250 for the Foundation during the August Bank Holiday weekend. Remember, it's not just our Scottish supporters who can enjoy the beauty of the Munros. Anyone interested in stretching their legs during Munro Madness 2005 need only call our Edinburgh office on 0131 228 3322 to register their interest.

Let battle commence

Pictured below is Edward, the winner of the recent Republic of Ireland Battle of the Bands.



So well did the competition go that we're now looking for the best student band in England and Wales.

We're inviting university and school year 12 and 13 student bands to compete with each other in a series of local and regional heats to make it through to the grand final.

At the grand final, the eight top bands will be looking to impress a panel of judges, consisting of musicians and record label representatives, to win the right to be top band in the country and prizes including time in a recording studio.

Interested? For more information call Sara Parish on 01454 281814 or email her at saraparish@meningitis.org

Rallying round for the Foundation

They really like their vintage vehicles in Northern Ireland.

The Classic Vehicle Club, and Seaforde Working Vintage Club, raised £2,000 and £2,500 respectively for the Foundation at their recent vintage rallies.

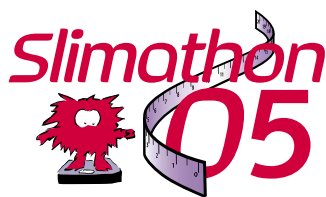
Is it just in the Province that they're answering the rallying call to raise funds for the Foundation in this way? We'd love to hear from other vintage clubs throughout the UK and Ireland who could support us. Do contact your local office if you can help.



Members of the Seaforde Working Vintage Club with the Foundation's Marianne McCorquodale

Less is more - Slimathon 2005

Do yourself and the Foundation a power of good by joining Slimathon 2005.



Your loss could be the Foundation's gain. As your pounds and ounces fall off, the pounds and pennies pile up for the Foundation's work.

Taking part in Slimathon 2005 is easy – choose a way to

lose that suits you and get your family, friends and colleagues to sponsor you for every disappearing pound between now and Easter.

Make the first move to a new you by calling or emailing your local office and receive your free Slimathon information pack.

Welcome visit

Member Lee Thorburn was a welcome recent visitor to our Edinburgh Office.



Lee, with parents Linda Knox and Grant Thorburn, was delivering a donation of £765. The sum was raised for Grant's 40th birthday when he very generously asked for money to go to the Foundation rather than birthday presents.

It was fantastic to meet Lee and show him round the office, and we were very impressed when he posed like a true star for his photo, along with Grant and the Foundation's Sarah Bromley.

Megaraid – Megabucks!

Dublin just about survived the first student Megaraid on the fair city on December 4.

Over 40 students from various Rags around the UK travelled over to Dublin for a one-day street collection.

Luckily the rain stayed away and the students braved the cold, some adorning very clever and creative outfits. A staggering €8,500 was raised.

Big thanks to all involved and congratulations to Nick Greenwood from Nottingham University who was the top collector. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.



The Pink Panther and pal



Many thanks to all our runners in last year's Great North Run including those from Brahm, Marstairs Ltd and Brighthouse Air Conditioning. Pictured before and after the race are members of the team running in memory of Erin Foster. If you'd like to run for the Foundation this year there are plenty of events to suit in the list below

April 17
The Flora London Marathon

If you've got a place in the Flora London Marathon, please consider running for the Foundation. For more information talk to Iain on 01454 281814 or email him at iainelliott@meningitis.org

March 12
Hope Church Service

Hope is a special service of thanksgiving and hope for anyone whose life has been touched by meningitis and septicaemia.

Inter-denominational in format, the fourth Hope service will take place at 2.00pm on Saturday March 12 at Christchurch, Waterden Road, Guildford, Surrey.

Central to the service is the Tree of

Hope. You are invited to write a message on a card, which will be pinned to the Tree of Hope.

For more information on any aspect of Hope, call Paula Jackson on 01483 577232.

March 27
Connemara Marathon

Take part in the Connemara Marathon and find out for yourself why Connemara is known as one of the last unspoilt areas in Ireland.

Situated in the West of Ireland, its natural terrain and unspoilt environment offers visitors a wonderland of sights, experiences, adventure and activities. There are a number of marathons to choose from, whether you prefer a half, full or ultra marathon there is something for everyone who enjoys a running challenge.

For more information, contact Kelly in Dublin on 01 496 9664 or email Kelly.meningitis@oceanfree.net

May 22
BUPA Great Manchester Run

A great run in a great city. 10k's the distance and more details are available from Sara Parish - 01454 281814 or fundraising@meningitis.org

May/June
Lydia's Appeal and the Ride for Meningitis

Following her son Oliver's traumatic brush with the pneumococcal strain of meningitis, Cara Mead from Kington St. Michael, Chippenham, Wiltshire is organising an unusual and ambitious fundraising event.

Cara will be cycling for seven days around her home county with a pod attached to her bike, hoping to cover around 250 miles. Stops en route will pick up different children to take their turn in riding in the pod.

Cara's journey will be raising funds for both the Foundation and Lydia's Appeal. Find out more by visiting the Lydia's Appeal website at www.meningitisappeal.org

June 12
Syntegra Edinburgh Marathon

The Foundation is looking for participants for both the Edinburgh Marathon and the **Baxter Loch Ness Marathon** later on in the year.

If you'd like to run in either of these two events for the Foundation, contact Sarah Bromley on 0131 228 3322 or by email at info@scotland-meningitis.org

July 3
British 10k Road Race

A quick trot around London anyone? More details on 01454 281814

September 4
Hydro Active Women's Challenge

Take your pick of venues from Birmingham, London and Liverpool in these 5k challenges. 01454 281814 if you're interested.

September 18
Great North Run

Wherever you come from in the UK and Ireland you are invited to compete in the Great North Run in Gateshead. Just get in touch with your local office.



You couldn't move on the Great Wall of China for Foundation supporters in October. Sue Lloyd's in the picture above, while Scottish supporter Caroline Dewey was accompanied on this exhilarating journey by her friend Lynn. Our range of life-changing adventure experiences is even wider this year. Hop on to our website or call Iain Elliott on 01454 281814 for details

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A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England No 4367866
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