

# History of Paediatrics in Pakistan

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## ABSTRACT

In 1947 there was no specialty of pediatrics in either Pakistan or India, and General Medicine incorporated every specialty. In this atmosphere Dr SMK Wasti started the first children outpatient department, on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1948 at Mayo Hospital, Lahore. In 1950, a small forsaken building in Mayo hospital was renovated by the philanthropist (Mrs. Saeeda Whaeed) and a 20 bedded children ward was established. A Hundred bedded hospital was established at Karachi in Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre from 1956 with both medical and surgical beds. Towards 1962, the Diploma in Child Health was instituted for the first time in the history of Pakistan, pediatrics became a postgraduate subject, and the children Department of Mayo Hospital became the teaching base for this important specialty. In the North-West Frontier Province on August 1971, a separate ward was given for the Pediatric Unit consisting of 30 beds. In 1974, the Pediatric Unit was upgraded to a full-fledged professional Department. In the province of Balochistan, the department of Pediatrics was established in Bolan Medical College since its inception.

**Key words:** History, Paediatrics, Pakistan

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## INTRODUCTION

In the long annals of medical history, pediatrics is a young specialty, scarcely 200 years old. By the late 1700s and early 1800s, the need to attend specifically to the care, development, and diseases of children became more apparent, and specialization in pediatrics evolved, particularly in Germany and France<sup>1,2</sup>. An early, if not the first, specialty organization was the Society for Infant Therapeutics, formed in Germany in 1883<sup>3</sup>. In the Western world, the first generally accepted pediatric hospital is the Hôpital des Enfants Malades (French: Hospital for Sick Children), which opened in Paris in June 1802 on the site of a previous orphanage. From its beginning, this famous hospital accepted patients up to the age of fifteen years and it continues to this day as the pediatric division of the Necker-Enfants Malades Hospital, created in 1920 by merger with the physically contiguous Necker Hospital, founded in 1778<sup>4,6</sup>.

This example was only gradually followed in other European countries<sup>5</sup>. The Charité (a hospital founded in 1710) in Berlin established a separate Pediatric Pavilion in 1830<sup>2,8</sup>, followed by similar institutions at Saint Petersburg in 1834, and at Vienna and Breslau (now Wrocław), both in 1837<sup>3,7</sup>. The English-speaking world waited until 1852 for its first pediatric hospital, the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, some fifty years after the founding of its namesake in Paris<sup>9,12</sup>. In the USA, the first similar institutions were the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, which opened in 1855, and then Boston Children's Hospital (1869)<sup>13-16</sup>.

Although "diseases peculiar to children" had figured in Benjamin Rush's lectures at the University of Pennsylvania since 1789<sup>17</sup>, most physicians in the early 19th century did not recognize children as a distinct population with particular medical needs<sup>18</sup>. Indeed, in most medical journals of this period, the words "infant," "child," and "children" figured only in case reports of obstetrical complications or in accounts of epidemic-related mortality<sup>9</sup>. Osler's use

of the term "pediatrics" not only differentiated physicians "specially connected with pediatrics" from other physicians<sup>1</sup> but also drew attention to the creation of a "special" discipline.<sup>20,21</sup> After Osler's introduction of the term, articles entitled "Progress in Pediatrics" began to appear sporadically in the *Journal* from 1904 forward, and the specialty of pediatrics was accorded its own section in the *Journal* in 1954<sup>22</sup>.

## DISCUSSION

United India was partitioned in 1947 and two countries Pakistan and India came into being<sup>23-25</sup>. There was no specialty of Pediatrics in the now newly made Pakistan like in India<sup>26</sup>. It was until then a Medical world in which it was assumed that General Medicine incorporated everything like dermatology, pediatrics, endocrinology, neurology, cardiology etc. In this atmosphere Dr SMK Wasti started the first children OPD, on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 1948 at Mayo Hospital, Lahore. On the first day six children were transferred from Medical OPD to Children OPD. Children OPD was a small room of 12x8 ft. inside the MOD, until 1956 when children OPD was shifted to the new OPD block. Dr Wasti had just returned from England, availing a pre-partition scholarship for doctors of united Punjab. The other recipient was a Sikh Lady, Miss Dhariwal, who opted to stay in India. Dr Wasti must be credited with facing the hostility of general physicians and surgeons, who in the beginning frowned upon to the appointment of pediatrician. But due to his persistence, the general public was introduced to the concept and role of pediatricians. Thereafter no Medical college was understood to be opened without various specialties spearheaded by Pediatrics. And the Children OPD would become the busiest and most popular OPD of

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the hospital all over the country. In 1950, a small forsaken building in Mayo hospital was renovated by the philanthropist (Mrs. Saeeda Waheed) and a 20 bedded children ward was established, while Assistant Professor post in Pediatric was created in the same year, which was elevated to Professorship in 1953 with augmented bed strength. An entirely new 6 bedded children block with administrative section constructed to which the Children Department was shifted in 1956. In 1956, the department of Paediatrics was shifted to its present premises, which was donated by Rai Bahadur Amarnath in 1946. In 1953 the Pediatric Unit was started at Fatima Jinnah Medical College, while at Nishtar Medical College Multan 24 beds for children were reserved and a post of Assistant Professor was created in 1959. This post was upgraded in 1971 with slightly increased bed strength. In 1976, the child Ward was specially built up. Child bed strength was increased to 52. There were about 2000-3000 admission every year, while the children OPD had a figure of 150000 cases. At Bahawalpur, professor post was created in 1974 in the children Block with about 40 beds.

By 1963 the concept of social and preventive pediatrics took a tangible shape and a post of registrar in social and preventive pediatrics of 1964 was upgraded to Associate Professorship in Social and Preventive Pediatrics in 1976. Towards 1962, the Diploma in child Health was instituted for the first time in the history of Pakistan, pediatrics became a postgraduate subject, and the children Department of Mayo Hospital became the teaching base for this important specialty<sup>27</sup>. It was also later extended to Sind University in the Liaquat Medical College in Hyderabad as well as Karachi and Peshawar Universities<sup>1</sup>.

While these developments were taking place in North, South was not far behind. An assistant professor in pediatrics was appointed in June 1951 for the first time, for both the Civil and Jinnah Hospitals. A Hundred bedded Hospitals was established at Karachi in JPMC from 1956 with both medical and surgical beds<sup>28</sup>. In 1958 a protect for the new 300 bedded children hospital was launched, and it was made ready by 1972 as a well-established and full-fledged National Institute of Child Health in the same compound as JPMC at a cost of about 90 lacs with international Assistance<sup>28</sup>. First Appointment of Professor was in 1964 when the JPMC was upgraded as Pediatric Postgraduate Training Institute. Professor Hamid Ali Khan and various Pediatricians contributed subsequently towards establishment of Pakistan Pediatric Association and represented Pakistan in various international moots.<sup>29</sup> A teacher to remember was Professor Razia J Rahimtoola who conducted detailed studies of infant

and child Nutrition.<sup>28</sup> At Jamshoro, since early fifties under Professor Ibrahim Memon, whose post was created in 1965. DCH was started in Karachi in 1964 and at Hyderabad in 1966.

In Pakhtoon Khawa province, the post of consultant in pediatrics was created in the Khyber Medical College, Peshawar with only 10 beds for sick children.<sup>1</sup> In 1970, an Honorary Registrar was appointed. In 1971, a post of Senior Registrar was sanctioned. In August 1971, a separate ward was given for the Pediatric Unit consisting of 30 beds. In 1974, the Pediatric Unit was upgraded to a full-fledged professional Department. The same year, Assistant Professor and Senior Registrar were appointed in the Department. In October 1976 another separate Pediatric Unit under Professor Imran was opened in the newly built Hayat Shaeed Teaching Hospital, and a special Baby care unit was set up with six incubators and ten cots. Senior Registrar was appointed in Neonatal Pediatrics were appointed.

In 1972, the Government of Pakistan acceding to the demand of the people of the Province formally decided to set-up a medical college at Quetta and agreed to run it as a Federally Funded Project.<sup>1</sup> In the province of Balochistan, the department of Pediatrics was established in Bolan Medical College since its inception. The department has 60 beds for children in Civil Hospital. There were two qualified specialists at Quetta who were also part of the Bolan Medical College, Professor Mohammed Rafiq and Professor Malik Kasi. This was pretty late development relative to the rest of the country. The post of Professor was created in 1981 and Professor Abdul Rafiq was the first occupant. The first fellow to join the department was Professor AG Nagi, Bolan Medical Complex Hospital was started in 2000, and now Bolan Medical College has four units and two professors.

Until 1962, demand of more Pediatricians was fulfilled by those returning from abroad after training. Naturally, it was an un-economical way of giving a medical cover to infants and children who constitute 44% of the population. To bridge the disparity the Diploma in Child Health was started in 1962 in Punjab and sometime late in Karachi and Hyderabad and Peshawar Universities. After the creation of Pakistan, the demand for creation of consultants arose, which the well know health Administrator, Late Col. SNK Mallick squarely met by mobilization of local resources, and by creating a number of Diplomas in the various specialties in the Punjab University soon after 1948. He organized the well-known historic "Symposium on Postgraduate Medical Education" under the auspices of Pakistan Association for the advancement of Science in the

11 Pakistan science conference in the anatomy hall of Dow Medical College with Lt. Gen. WAK Burki, the then Minister of Health as President and Professor SMK Wasti as Secretary.<sup>29</sup> The symposium whose proceedings are a historical document created a universal demand of postgraduate education, and generated heart-searching and a chain of events, and culmination in the creation of College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan by a Presidential Ordinance in 1962<sup>30</sup>. All the Pediatric units of recognized Medical Colleges were made seats of instruction and became entitled to prepare post graduate students for membership and Fellowship examination of the college. This important move lifted the standard of Pediatrics teaching and practice to international levels, and contrived to provide the huge demands of pediatric specialists for all over the sprawling countryside<sup>1</sup>. The college serving as an Examining body stimulated pooling of teaching resources and gave fillip to a powerful movement of Postgraduate Medical Education throughout East and West Pakistan. It hardly needs being stated that pediatrics was one of the first and important specialties included in the list for examinations both at Membership and Fellowship levels<sup>30</sup>.

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