



AUGUST 2003

SOCIETY FOR PEDIATRIC AND PERINATAL EPIDEMIOLOGIC RESEARCH

President's Corner

The 16th Annual Meeting of SPER was held in Atlanta on June 10-11. The quality of the presented abstracts was outstanding and the informal discussions among colleagues were, as always, a pleasure.

President Pierre Buekens chose, as one theme for the meeting, randomized clinical trials. The opening session, on Tuesday evening, was an informative panel discussion of two multicenter research networks funded by NICHD – the Neonatal and the Maternal Fetal Medicine Units Networks.

The Wednesday morning plenary sessions included a report that recreational physical activity before and during pregnancy is associated with a reduced risk of gestational diabetes. We hope, at a future meeting, to hear the results of a randomized trial of this seemingly beneficial exposure. Other studies related to pregnancy outcomes after age 50; fetal origins of racial disparity in reproductive outcomes; the intersecting mortality versus birth weight curves for blacks and whites, and smokers and non-smokers; the effects of age, period, and birth cohorts on fetal mortality; and the racial disparity in mortality among triplets. Also, we heard reports of an association of pre-gestational obesity and preeclampsia, pacifier use and a lower risk of SIDS, and fetal growth restriction and an increased risk of cerebral ventricular enlargement. A prevalence study of tuberculin sensitivity was presented by the winner of the 2003 Student Paper Prize, Dr. Anoop Sebastian, from the St. John's Medical College in India. Research was reported from the multicenter population-based SEARCH for Diabetes in Youth Study, from which we can anticipate many informative studies of an increasingly prevalent condition.

One of the highlights of the meeting was the keynote address by Curt Meinert, whose collaborations, as a biostatistician, have included numerous randomized trials

in children. The results of three well-designed randomized trials were then presented. I am grateful to Pierre for his wise choice of randomized trials as a focus for this year's meeting and I share his hope that future meetings will include a substantial number of presentations derived from randomized trials.

The afternoon plenary session, which was focused on methods, was outstanding. Topics discussed included a novel statistical approach for describing perinatal mortality, a method for enhancing the ascertainment of maternal mortality, the differences between geographically- and clinic- based samples of mothers, and specific measures of placental size as an outcome of interest in epidemiologic studies.

In many respects, the 16th Annual Meeting was a tremendous success. Thanks to the dedication and talents of Pierre Buekens, Anna Maria Siega-Riz, Cande Ananth, our four Members at Large, and Joe Stanford and his colleagues from the University of Utah, there were few, if any, logistical, audio-visual, or culinary problems. We are especially grateful to Mary Hediger for her service as Member-at-Large. Congratulations to Pierre Buekens for a highly productive year as SPER President! May the summer bring each of us a bit of time to relax, reflect, and re-energize.



Michael O'Shea, MD

Business Meeting Minutes, Pictures, and List of New Officers

Please go to our web site www.sper.org/news.htm to view the minutes from the Business Meeting held on June 11th at the end of the Annual Meeting, pictures of SPER officers and our student prize winner, and the contact information for SPER officers.

We are pleased to announce the results of the election:

David Savitz – President-elect

Gary Shaw – Member-at-large

Thank you to Martha Werler, Wendy Hellerstedt, and Janet Rich-Edwards for running for office.

Reports from Liaisons

Farewell from Linda Van Marter

As I draw to the end of my term as liaison between the Society for Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiologic Research and the AAP Section on Epidemiology, I reflect on the many bright, creative, dedicated individuals I have met through each organization. I look forward to continuing these relationships through future involvement with both groups. Many thanks for the opportunity to serve as liaison. For Linda's full report please see the [web site](#).

Information on the European Network by Jennifer Zeitlin

The European Perinatal Epidemiology Network will have its annual meeting on Friday October 3rd 2003 in Oxford on the theme "Measuring the outcome of pregnancy in Europe". The morning session will focus on developments in measuring and comparing outcomes of pregnancy in routine data collection systems and in research. It will include reports of work done in the European Health Monitoring Programme and by the international Confederation of Midwives. The first afternoon session will be on developing positive measures of

health outcome for use in research. A final session will explore the potential for European and other collaboration on the theme of care provided for migrant women, including refugees and asylum seekers.

The meeting will take place at the Department of Physics, University of Oxford, from 9:00 am to 4:45 pm. This meeting follows on from the 25th anniversary meeting organized by the National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit on the 2nd of October.

For a complete program and a booking form, please email Alison Macfarlane at A.J.Macfarlane@city.ac.uk Or go to the web site:

<http://www.staff.city.ac.uk/a.j.macfarlane/Oct3page.htm>

Mark Your Calendar Now

Please mark your calendar now for our next meeting to be held June 14th-15th at the Grand America Hotel, Salt Lake City, Utah. WEBSITE: www.grandamerica.com

LOCATION: The Grand America Hotel is conveniently located on 10 acres in the heart of downtown Salt Lake City, just 10 minutes from the Salt Lake International Airport. Ensnored by the Wasatch and Oquirrh Mountain Ranges in the magnificent Salt Lake Valley, the Grand America is walking distance from shopping, restaurants, cultural and sporting events and is roughly 30-40 minutes from the major ski resorts. Nearby are historic Temple Square, the world-famous Great Salt Lake, four major rivers, national parks, forests and monuments.