

## History of the *Annual Report*

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The *Annual Report on the Results of Treatment in Gynecologic Cancer* has its roots in work originally produced by the Radiological Subcommittee of the Cancer Commission of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations. In 1928, this group was asked to explore the possibility of having uniform statistical information on the results of radiotherapeutic treatment methods for uterine cervical cancer. This Subcommittee recommended that this could only be accomplished if various institutions would produce their results in a uniform and consistent manner. The task of producing such results was given to J Heyman from the Radiumhemmet in Stockholm, A Lacassagne from Radium Institute of the University of Paris, and F Voltz from Munich. The recommendations of these experts, with minor modifications, were adopted by the Subcommittee and published in April of 1929 [1]. One of the major items that emerged from this activity was a classification system for grouping carcinoma of the uterine cervix into different stages according to the extent of the growth. This system became known as the League of Nations Classification for cervical cancer and was amongst the first attempts at having an international staging system for this disease. Although the recommendations made by the Radiological Subcommittee for collecting and analyzing materials were adopted in several countries, widespread use did not occur.

In July 1934, the Health Organisation held a conference in Zurich, attended by former members of the Subcommittee and other international experts, to advise what further action might be pursued to facilitate wider endorsement and adoption of these principles. This conference recommended that a publication in the

form of an annual report should be issued by the Health Organisation analyzing the results of treatment by radiotherapy in cancer of the uterine cervix, estimated after an observation of 5 or more years. It was stated that the primary objective of the proposed annual statistical report should be to provide a convenient work of reference for those who wished to know the results and statistics regarding patients treated with radiotherapy for cancer of the cervix uteri.

The recommendations of the Zurich conference were adopted by the Health Committee in 1935 and in October of that year an Advisory Committee, chaired by J Heyman, was appointed to carry out this task. The first three *Annual Reports* were issued in 1937, 1938 and 1939, and contained only the results of cervical cancer treated by radiotherapy, but indicated that future reports would be expanded to hopefully include material relating to carcinoma of the corpus uteri and of the vagina.

The first *Annual Report* contained statements from the six participating institutions listed in Table 1. In an attempt to promote more uniform grouping of cases, to minimize variation and to secure comparabilities and statistics for the *Annual Report*, Heyman and Strandquist published the first *Atlas on Cervical Cancer Staging*, in 1938. The second *Annual Report*, published in 1938, contained changes to the wording and definitions for the various stages of cervical cancer and, as such, represents the first recorded changes to the cervical cancer staging system. No further changes were made until 1950, at which time the Editorial Committee met with nine American representatives at the International Gynecological Congress and Fourth American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology, held in New York in May 1950.

Table 1  
Initial group of institutions contributing to the *Annual Report*

Institution	Location
The Centre of Tumors from the University of Brussels	Brussels, Belgium
Liverpool Radium Institute	Liverpool, England
Marie Curie Hospital	London, England
The Radium Centre for Carcinoma of the Uterus, The London County Council	London, England
The Institute for Radium from the University of Paris	Paris, France
The Radiumhemmet	Stockholm, Sweden

This joint group agreed to several modifications of the classification adopted by the Health Organisation of the League of Nations in 1937. It recommended that this new classification be termed "The International Classification of the Stages of Carcinoma of the Uterine Cervix" and that all organizations concerned with this problem be approached to consider its adoption. Since then, seven changes have been made to the staging system for cervical cancer, the most recent being in 1994. Almost all of these changes were made to Stage I cervical cancer.

The collecting of information for the fourth *Annual Report* was carried out in spite of difficulties with postal communication caused by the outbreak of World War II. In August 1940, the Editor was informed by the League of Nations that, because of the existing conditions, it was unable to undertake the publication of the fourth *Report*. The costs of printing and distributing the fourth *Report* were then assumed by the Cancerföreningen in Stockholm and the fourth edition appeared in 1941. Following this, all work on the *Annual Report* came to a standstill until 1945 when the Editor Heyman began explanatory work to see if it could be reinstated. The Editorial Office was eventually re-established in Stockholm, with generous financial support from the Radiumhemmet, and invitations to contribute to the fifth *Report* were then extended to previous collaborators as well as new institutions. Over the next decade, financial support for the *Annual Report* was obtained from a variety of international organizations, institutions and societies.

In 1958 the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) became the first official patron of the *Annual Report* and Volume 12, issued in 1961, became the first report issued under its sponsorship. The collection and publication of the data of the report, however, continued to be primarily dependent on the generous financial support from a variety of international cancer organizations, and particularly the Radiumhemmet.

The first three volumes were published annually. Subsequent volumes have been issued at irregular intervals although an attempt was made to publish annually once again from 1951 through 1955. Since 1973, the *Annual Report* has been published every three years to coincide with the year of the FIGO World Congresses.

Volume 8, issued in 1953, saw the first reports on the

results of treatment of carcinoma of the corpus. Data on vaginal cancer first appeared in Volume 13 (1964) and similar information on ovary and vulvar cancer was first published in Volume 15 (1973) and 17 (1979) respectively.

From the initial six collaborators, the number of contributing institutions has grown over the years. At the time of publication of the *Twenty-Second Annual Report*, in 1994, 117 international tumor institutions and hospitals have made material available for collation and presentation in this historic publication. As the content of the *Annual Report* changed to reflect the incorporation of data from the other gynecological sites, the name of the publication was altered to the current title *Annual Report on the Results of Treatment in Gynecological Cancer*.

For all of the previous *Annual Reports*, the Editorial Office was based in Stockholm. In 1994, with the impending retirement of its Editor, F Pettersson, the Executive Board of FIGO approved moving the office for the *Annual Report* to the European Institute of Oncology in Milan, with S Pecorelli as the new Editor. In its long and successful history the *Annual Report* to date has only had three past Editors. The three individuals who have provided the distinguished and exemplary leadership as Editors of the previous *Annual Reports* are listed in Table 2. Information regarding the staging and results of treatment for all gynecological sites is included in these publications.

The publication of Volume 25 in the year 2003 marks the sixty-sixth year of activity for this endeavor, a truly ongoing piece of gynecological history and tradition, and a remarkable tribute to the vision and leadership of its founders and previous Editors.

Table 2  
Past Editors of the Annual Report

Dr J Heyman	1937–1956
Dr H L Kottmeier	1956–1982
Dr F Pettersson	1982–1994

## REFERENCE

- <sup>1</sup> Document CH788 series. League of Nations Publications 1929. III, Number 5.