

## **An appreciation of *Paraplegia*, the International Journal of The Spinal Cord, and its role as a coordinator of information**

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Mr Phillip Harris, the editor of *Paraplegia* has always recognised that *Paraplegia* has a vital role in the coordination of information about spinal cord injury related matters throughout the world. As *Paraplegia* continued to evolve as the key journal for the dissemination of scientific information on matters related to spinal cord damaged persons, it became clear to him that, with the growth of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia and the progressive development of services for the spinal cord injured throughout the world, it was essential that all matters relating to the spinal cord injured everywhere in the world were made known to all Society members.

In 1988 Mr Harris established the information coordinator role for the Society and the journal with myself in charge. Key Society members were identified throughout the world to undertake the task of collecting information in their country and region relevant to spinal cord injuries.

Every second month the regional information coordinators forward to the IMSOP Office at Stoke Mandeville information in their area relevant to spinal cord injuries, including meetings, seminars, courses, new appointments, new units, obituaries, major book publications, honours etc. This is collated by the central information coordinator in the secretariat in Stoke Mandeville Hospital and forwarded to the editor for inclusion in the journal. In this way,

readers of *Paraplegia* are kept abreast of all key developments in the field of spinal cord injuries not only in their own geographical area but also throughout the world. In this way the International Medical Society of Paraplegia continues, through its journal, to cement the links between those involved in the research and treatment of spinal cord injuries.

A major goal of the International Medical Society of Paraplegia since its earliest days has been to foster and encourage the development of services to the spinal cord injured throughout the world, in particular in financially disadvantaged countries. All members of the Society receive the journal. To assist doctors from financially disadvantaged countries to become members, the Swiss Fund has provided subsidies to help ensure that as many persons as possible in such regions receive *Paraplegia* and are thereby kept up to date in all the key areas of spinal cord injuries.

It will be clear that *Paraplegia* is a journal that is being continuously improved and developed. For this all members of the Society owe a debt to the editor, his assistant editors, the editorial board and information coordinators. Without their efforts the journal would not be able to continue its role as the key disseminator of information and research on matters relating to spinal cord injuries.