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扶輪與夥伴追捕小兒麻痺

Rotary, partners keep polio on the run

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扶輪出版譯

By Joseph Derr, Rotary International News
Photo by Alyce Henson



世界衛生組織的 Bruce Aylward 博士說去年研發的新工具與策略有助於終結小兒麻痺。Dr. Bruce Aylward of WHO said new tools and strategies launched within the last year can help end polio.

丹麥哥本哈根報導——今天，在扶輪與其根除小兒麻痺夥伴就要勝利在望時，新的工具與策略也正協助緊密追捕小兒麻痺病毒。

6 月 13 日，在哥本哈根貝拉中心舉行的 2006 年國際扶輪年會中，有一項根除小兒麻痺等疾病計畫的特別會議，吸引數百名扶輪社員出席。主講人是世界衛生組織的海曼(David Heymann) 博士，重點在報告根除小兒麻痺之戰的最新發展。

海曼說：「過去一年來有大幅度的進展。有 2 種新疫苗研發成功並廣泛使用，還有一項對抗第一型小兒麻痺的全新策略。」

為了因應埃及與印度根除小兒麻痺的挑戰，一種新疫苗在半年之內研發並取得使用執照，結果證實比過去的疫苗更有效。這種疫苗乃是今年稍早埃及與尼日得以從小兒麻痺流行國名單刪除的關鍵。

2006 年 1 月，全球根除小兒麻痺夥伴宣佈一種鎖定最難控制的第一型小兒麻痺的新策略。由於扶輪的協助，根除小兒麻痺運動現在也在設法推動在大眾運輸工具為人免疫的策略，在大城市裡這意味著一次可接觸到數十萬人。

海曼說：「我們發展出工具，可是讓兒童服用疫苗的關鍵卻是扶輪社員。疫苗若未進入兒童體內也無法發揮作用。」

海曼表示，國際社會也重申投入這場戰役的決心。爆發

Copenhagen, Denmark — Today, as Rotary and its polio eradication partners stand at the brink of their goal, new tools and strategies are keeping polio on the run.

On 13 June, hundreds of Rotarians attended a special PolioPlus update session at the 2006 Rotary International Convention at Copenhagen's Bella Center. Guest speaker Dr. David Heymann, of the World Health Organization, reported new developments in the fight to eradicate polio.

"Progress in the last 12 months has been extraordinary," said Heymann. "Two new vaccines have been developed and are in wide use, along with a whole new strategic approach to attack type 1 polio."

A powerful new vaccine, developed and licensed within six months to meet the challenge of eradicating the disease in Egypt and India, is more effective than previous ones. This vaccine was the key to success earlier this year when Egypt and Niger were removed from the list of polio-endemic countries.

In January 2006, global polio eradication partners announced a new strategic approach of targeting type 1 polio, the most difficult to control. Thanks to Rotary's assistance, polio campaigns also are now looking at ways to incorporate a strategy for immunizing people on mass public transportation, which in large cities can account for hundreds of thousands of people at a time.

"We develop the tools, but it is the Rotarians who are key to getting this vaccine in kids," said Heymann. "No vaccine works unless it's in a child."

International commitment also has been renewed, Heymann said.

小兒麻痺疫情的國家將會面臨更大的國際壓力來敦促他們快速採取因應行動，因為世界衛生會議通過一項規定各國因應方式的新決議案。在今年5月的世界衛生會議中，歐盟鼓勵各國政府也要盡一己之力來協助根除小兒麻痺。

海曼鼓勵扶輪社員繼續在全國免疫日時，訪視與支持疫區的扶輪社員。美國密西根州多瓦吉亞克(Dowagiac)扶輪社的葛羅納(David Groner)也同意此看法。

葛羅納說：「我們應該要同舟共濟。他們（小兒麻痺流行國的扶輪社員）是在最前線，而我們則是啦啦隊。無法參與接種疫苗的扶輪社員可以寄張100美元的支票。這是我們所能做最簡單的事。」

剩餘的小兒麻痺流行國——阿富汗、巴基斯坦、印度、奈及利亞——的技術、營運、與安全方面的挑戰依然有待克服。然而海曼強調說，過去一年來的進展已經讓扶輪比以往都更接近成功，他感謝扶輪社員的領導與持續的支持。

根除小兒麻痺最主要的困難，在於剩餘小兒麻痺流行國中病毒不斷的散播。從這些地方，小兒麻痺可以持續跨越邊界，傳播至無小兒麻痺的地方。衛生專家都認為今年內便可終止小兒麻痺的傳播，唯一的例外是奈及利亞，該國至少還要一年的時間才能遏止傳播。

海曼在結語時告訴扶輪社員：「感謝各位為全球衛生所做的貢獻，也感謝各位樹立各國夥伴引以為標準的卓越典範。」

Countries where outbreaks occur will see greater international pressure to act fast because of a new resolution passed by the World Health Assembly that dictates how countries should respond. At the World Health Assembly in May, the European Union recently encouraged governments to do their part to help eradicate polio.

Heymann encouraged Rotarians to continue visiting and supporting fellow Rotarians from the endemic areas during National Immunization Days (NID). David Groner, of the Rotary Club of Dowagiac, Michigan, USA, agreed.

"We're all in this together, they [Rotarians in endemic countries] are the front line, and we're the cheerleaders," Groner said. "For club members who can't go to vaccinate, send a check for \$100. It's the easiest thing you can do."

The challenges of overcoming technical, operational, and security challenges in the remaining polio-endemic countries of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Nigeria remain. Yet Heymann stressed that the progress made during the last 12 months has put Rotary closer than ever to success, and he thanked Rotarians for their leadership and continued support.

The primary challenge to polio eradication is the ongoing transmission of the poliovirus in the remaining endemic countries. It's from these areas that polio can continue to be exported into polio-free areas. Health experts agree that stopping the spread of polio can be done this year, except in Nigeria, where at least an additional 12 months will be required to finish the job.

In conclusion, Heymann told Rotarians, "Thank you for what you've done for global health and for setting an extraordinary standard by which international partnerships are measured."