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History of the Stomatology Service at Hospital de Santo António in Porto

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ABSTRACT: This article presents a historical overview of the Stomatology Service at Hospital de Santo António (Porto), framed within the broader evolution of medical specialization at the institution. It begins by examining the early organizational model of the Hospital in the nineteenth century, highlighting the gradual differentiation of medical disciplines and the context in which Stomatology emerged as a distinct area of practice.

The study then traces the formal establishment and consolidation of the Stomatology Service from 1913 onwards, emphasizing the biographies and professional trajectories of the specialists who shaped its clinical, academic, and organizational development. Particular attention is given to the interaction between Stomatology and other medical and surgical specialties, as well as to the Service's progressive integration within the Portuguese National Health Service.

Finally, the article addresses the modernization of the Service in the late twentieth century and its development in the twenty-first century, including technological advances, expansion into maxillofacial surgery, and its ongoing role in training healthcare professionals. By situating Stomatology within the institutional history of HGSA, this study underscores its continued relevance and adaptability in contemporary medicine.

KEYWORDS: Stomatology; Maxillofacial Surgery; Hospital de Santo António; History of Medicine; Porto

EARLY ORGANIZATION OF HOSPITAL DE SANTO ANTÓNIO

The enormous development of medical knowledge, as well as the technological explosion seen in the 20th century, especially in its second half, led to the fragmentation of medical practice, with the emergence of successive “specialties” or even just “competencies,” which modified the landscape of the organization of health services, particularly in hospitals.

As an important referral hospital for a large geographical area of the country, HGSA has a significant responsibility in the training of healthcare profession-

als, a role it acquired in 1825 with the creation of the Royal School of Surgery.

In 1895, the year Röntgen invented X-rays, the doctors at HGSA were almost all surgeons, mostly trained at the Medical-Surgical School. The inpatient units were mostly medical-surgical wards, although some were designated as Surgery and others as Medicine. However, this did not prevent doctors from working in either area. The “specialized” wards were more a matter of internal social or organizational reasons than of technical differentiation among professionals.

In 1890, and indeed for the next 30 or 40 years, the



Fig. 1 – A nineteenth-century engraving of Hospital Real de Santo António, Porto, and portrait of John Carr (1723–1807), British architect who designed the building.

Hospital was almost exclusively dedicated to inpatient care. The outpatient clinic, then designated as “Bank, Acceptance and Consultation,” was small compared to the inpatient area, and the doctors who worked there were often hired exclusively for that purpose. Inpatient care, the most important core of the Hospital, took place in more than 70% of cases in wards designated as General or Medical-Surgical, which had a Medical Director and an Assistant Director as their medical staff.

Regarding the organization of HGSA, the regulations published in 1858 show that article 101 stipulated: “External physicians and surgeons must, and it is their responsibility, enter their respective wards no later than nine o’clock in the morning without fail, in summer and winter, to visit their patients.” The surgeons operated on all pathologies, from phimosis to cataracts, from amputation to tonsillectomy.

The wards that existed at the time, in addition to the “General” wards, were intended for particular groups of patients, such as the “Delivery” ward, which housed the vast majority of women in labor; however, the doctors were not specialized, at least not in the current sense. The “tuberculosis” wards (one for men and another for women) and the “smallpox” ward were intended to isolate highly contagious patients. There was a tradition at HGSA of providing care to “prostitutes,” so the “tolerated” ward was created separately, which was often a source of conflict and problems in the Hospital, as was the “prison” ward, where patients serving sentences in the nearby Relação prison were treated. However, these wards did not correspond to the modern notion of specialty, but rather to the need to isolate “undesirable” patients such as tuberculosis patients,

plague victims, smallpox patients, prostitutes, or prisoners.

At that time, only Midwifery roughly corresponded to the concept of a specialty. Homeopathy, however, became the first truly autonomous specialty and even an alternative to the rest of medical activity, beginning operations on December 25, 1867, in fulfillment of a legacy. The “Specialty” of Homeopathy, created by legacy and testamentary disposition of the benefactor Count of Ferreira, began its activity in 1867, having from the beginning its own infirmary and specialized doctors. It was always very controversial and sometimes contested, notably in the Report of the Reformer Prof. Costa Simões, published as early as 1882.

In this report, the reformer expresses his astonishment at the ever-increasing number of beds that Homeopathy was acquiring, which he attributed to the fact that, in the 1860s and 1870s, the Provedor (head of



Fig. 2 – Nineteenth-century hospital register, HGSA.

the institution) was a doctor who promoted Homeopathy, Dr. Moutinho, who was succeeded as Provedor by his brother-in-law, Dr. Cyrne, who held the position from 1875 to 1882. Professor Costa Simões proposed “reducing the homeopathic clinic.” Homeopathy, which, according to the reporter, treated patients with “the simple internal application of distilled water and bread crumb in pills,” had been imported directly from Brazil by important merchants “very rich in fortune but extremely poor in medical science.” Professor Simões ultimately proposed a maximum of 31 beds, just to fulfill the Legacy.

THE STOMATOLOGY SERVICE

The Stomatology Service had its beginnings on June 19, 1874, the date on which the position of dentist was created by resolution of the Board of Directors of the Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Porto. This decision was made at the request of Cândido Truco, a dental surgeon, so that he could be granted the effective title and, as such, the creation of the position, which could not be carried out without the consent of the Board. The Board then decided that the position should be created with an annual salary of 100.00 reais. Cândido Truco was succeeded by his son, Mariano Fernandes Truco, a “Dental Surgeon” from the Porto Medical-Surgical School, appointed on March 18, 1886.

However, the dental clinic was only created on August 11, 1913, by the Board of Directors and developed further after the bequest of the benefactor Higino António Silva, also a dentist, who left all his assets to the Santa Casa with the obligation to create an infirmary “for free dental care.” The report of the Board of Directors for 1913–1914 refers to the session of May 5, 1913, in which the appointment of four Directors of Specialty Services was approved, among them Dr. Jerónimo Carlos da Silva Moreira for the Stomatology Service.

In 1915, competitions were opened for Assistants in various specialties, one of which was Stomatology. The jury was composed of four members: Dr. Jerónimo Moreira (Director of the Stomatology Service), Alberto Perry Sampaio and Alberto Ribeiro, surgeons, and A. Teixeira Lopes, Director of the ENT Service. It is worth noting that Dr. Perry Sampaio had completed an internship in Paris in 1902 in the areas of mouth and dental pathology but always continued to practice general surgery.



Fig. 3 – Late 19th-century oak dentist's cabinet.



Fig. 4 – Dental chair used for odontological treatments, first half of the 20th century. (Museu HGSA collection).



Fig. 5 – Whitehead mouth gag.

This competition provoked controversy, with protests and complaints, ultimately resulting in appointments made by the Board. In a session of the Medical Council on June 10, 1915, the Provider announced the opening of five positions for 1st Assistant and five for 2nd Assistant for Special Clinics, including Stomatology. After several sessions, the Clinical Director informed that, regarding Stomatology, it would not be prudent to open a competition until the construction of the outpatient clinic for that specialty was complete. However, as the Director, Dr. Jerónimo Moreira, stated that he had been assured the construction would be finished by the competition deadline, it was decided to proceed with the competition.

The 1916–1917 report includes statistics from the Stomatology Service, with 1,580 patients registered at the Emergency Department. The Director was Dr. Jerónimo Moreira; there was an assistant physician, Dr. António Mendes, and a student instructor, Alfredo Barata da Rocha. However, the statistics decreased in the following three years to 1,084, 882, and 789 in 1920, with the same staffing structure.

Until 1924, the two doctors continued, but from that date onwards the assistant became Dr. Amândio Costa Guimarães, who, after Dr. Jerónimo's retirement in 1934, became Director, with the assistant position being filled by José Maria Braga.

In 1937, competitions were opened for several positions, with Dr. José Frazão Nazaré (later Clinical Director of the Hospital) becoming Director, Dr. António Silva Paul becoming 1st Assistant, and Dr. Fernando Costa Leite becoming 2nd Assistant. Dr. António Silva Paul later succeeded Dr. José Frazão Nazaré and was responsible for the first surgical steps of the Service.

Following the decommissioning of barracks after the end of the colonial war, the former barracks on Rua D. Manuel II were handed over to HGSA (the eastern half) and to the University Rectorate. It is worth remembering the important role played in this process by then Brigadier Pires Veloso, who commanded the Northern Military Region. This allowed for the establishment, at the end of the 1970s, of the Pathology, Microbiology, Immunology, and Stomatology Services. In the 1980s, a modern pavilion was built for Outpatient Consultations, the Central Clinical Archive, and other administrative services.

In 1970, Dr. Lino Ferreira took office, a position he held until 1986, and he was one of the key figures in



Fig. 6 – Stomatology Service team under the direction of Dr. José Frazão Nazaré.

the development of Oral Pathology and Surgery. Dr. Teodoro Bettencourt de Sousa was appointed in 1986, and it was during this period that the Service assumed responsibility for all facial traumatology, with the Plastic Surgery department moving to the Prelada Hospital. Thus, by ministerial decree of December 29, 1988, it was renamed the “Stomatology and Maxillofacial Surgery Service.”

In this development, the collaboration of Drs. Adriano Figueiredo, Eduardo Coelho, and the current Director, Dr. Carlos Monteiro, was fundamental. The Service maintained and enhanced Oral Pathology, to which colleagues Drs. Henrique Santos, Carlos Moreira, and Barbas do Amaral contributed. Meanwhile, the Oral Pathology Course was established, with a biennial schedule.

During the last quarter of the century, HGSA evolved technically and scientifically and achieved great national and international prestige. In technological terms, it is worth noting the opening of the first CT scanner in 1982, the progressive automation of the laboratories, and the significant increase in Intensive Care units, whose quality of work has been the basis for the success of the Organ Transplant program, which greatly enhanced HGSA. In fact, the Ophthalmology Service had already been performing corneal transplants since the 1960s, having the largest national caseload, which by the end of the century was approaching 2,000. The Kidney Transplant program began in 1983, the Liver Transplant program in 1995, and the Pancreatic Transplant program in 2000.

THE SERVICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In 2001, the direction of the Stomatology and Maxillofacial Surgery Service came under the supervision of Dr. Conceição Cerqueira. At the end of the 1980s, the Service began providing surgical orthodontic treatment for patients with dentofacial dysmorphism. In this context, in addition to Dr. Conceição Cerqueira, Dr. Carlos Miranda and later Dr. Filipe Pina collaborated in orthodontic treatment. In the surgical area, the collaboration included Dr. Carlos Monteiro (current Director), Dr. Rui Costa e Sousa (who had completed a cephalometry internship in England), Drs. Alfredo Figueiredo Dias, Rui Balhau, and Dr. Lígia. Drs. Asdrúbal Pinto and Barbas do Amaral began collaborating in the Medicine course, teaching stomatological semiology, while maintaining the Orofacial Pain and Oral Pathology consultation, to which Dr. Eva Pacheco contributes, especially in patients with blood dyscrasias.

Drs. José Reis and Valdemar Gomes collaborated in oral rehabilitation, which are also areas of expertise of the Service.

In 2010, the management passed to Dr. Carlos Monteiro, who remains the current Director. The inpatient unit is now located in Surgery 2, and outpatient surgical activity is carried out in the new wing, while general anesthesia continues to be administered in the Orthopedics and Neoclassical Block. The specialists integrated into the eight emergency teams ensure the treatment of patients who come to the Emergency Department in the areas of Stomatology and Maxillofacial Surgery every day of the year.

After five years of collaboration with master's students in orthodontics and orthognathic surgery from the Faculty of Medicine of Porto, Dr. Filipe Pina, in partnership with Drs. Carlos Miranda, Asdrúbal Pinto, and Carlos Monteiro, launched a course on dentofacial dysmorphism.

In a survey of Porto citizens conducted in 1997 by the Faculty of Economics, when asked about the most important institutions in the city, HGSA ranked third, behind the City Council and FC Porto, but ahead of the University, SCMP (Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto), and the Palace of Justice. This data accurately reflects how the city regards "its" hospital. Its location in the city center, the grandeur of its headquarters building, and above all the important services provided to the population for over 200 years underpin how the city and the region feel connected to the Institution.



Fig. 7 – Stomatologists and staff associated with the Stomatology and Maxillofacial Surgery Service, HGSA