

## INTRODUCTION

Since this is the first formal Annual Report of the Department, some historical facts are included as background information.

The paediatric cardiology service at the Bristol Children's Hospital (BCH) was initially developed in the late 1960s and 1970s, mainly through the efforts of Dr S C Jordan. Closed heart surgery at the BCH and open heart surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI) was initially performed by Mr R Belsey (retired), Mr G Keen and, since 1975, Mr J D Wisheart. Dr H S Joffe was appointed as a second consultant paediatric cardiologist in 1980. In the early part of this decade the South Western Regional Health Authority (SWRHA) adopted a policy to extend adult and paediatric open heart surgery in Bristol to enable the department to comply with its regional role. As part of the planned expansion, the two cardiac catheterisation laboratories at the BRI were to be overhauled (almost completed) and a third suite was established at the BCH, with new biplane angiography equipment in each unit. There has been a steady increase in the surgical throughput and this is reflected in the data presented below. Mr J P Dhasmana was appointed as a third consultant cardiac surgeon in 1985 and now shares the paediatric workload.

In 1984, the Bristol unit was designated by the DHSS as one of the nine supraregional centres for infant cardiology and cardiac surgery in England. Since then there has been a further increase in the numbers admitted to the BCH for assessment and investigations, and to the BCH and BRI for surgery. Children are now referred from the S W Region, and parts of Wessex and South Wales, and beyond.

## ADMISSIONS

The number of cardiac admissions to the BCH for assessment, medical treatment, investigation and closed heart surgery between 1980 and 1987 is given in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 1.

Total admissions have more than doubled, and infant admissions more than trebled, since 1980. This is in keeping with the unit's growing regional role, and its designation as a supraregional centre for infants since 1984. Although admissions from the S W Region appear to have stabilised in 1987, those from Wessex and especially South Wales continue to increase (Figure 2). This trend is even more striking in respect of infants.

Admissions to the BRI are dealt with under Cardiac Surgery.