

IPC Celebrates 50 Years!

September 2003

The Illinois Poison Center (IPC) celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, and was recognized as the first poison center in the United States at the North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology (NACCT) last month.

In a presentation at the NACCT's Keynote Luncheon on September 7, 2003, Dr. Jerry Leiken acknowledged the 50th anniversary of the poison center, which was first established by Louis Gdalmann, M.D., at Rush St. Luke's Presbyterian hospital in 1953.

In the 1970s and '80s, poison centers expanded into many Illinois hospitals. Due to the overwhelming cost of maintaining a 24-hour emergency call center, many of the hospital-based poison centers in Illinois began closing their doors in the '90s. The last remaining poison center operating in Illinois (the Chicago and Northeastern Illinois Regional Poison Control Center) announced in 1996 that it was about to close because the hospital that ran it could no longer afford to be the sole operating poison center to serve the metropolitan Chicago area. On January 1, 1997, the IPC became a program of the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council and expanded its services to serve the entire state of Illinois.

Happy Anniversary IPC! Here's to another great 50 years!