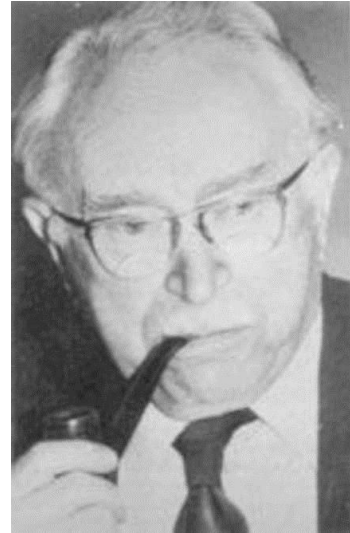


Sir Ludwig Guttman

Sir Ludwig Guttman (1899-1980) was a renowned German physician and surgeon. Despite being considered one of the country's leading neurosurgeons, he was forced into exile and to seek refuge in England for being Jewish in the time of Nazi Germany.



During the Second World War, cases of paraplegia and quadriplegia increased, and it resulted in death in most cases. Those who survived did so with a poor quality of life and were destined to remain in institutions for the incurably ill for the rest of their lives.

In 1944, the British government appointed Dr. Guttman as director of a new centre for those affected by spinal cord injuries, which was based in Stoke Mandeville Hospital near London. The position was accepted on the condition that the centre be independent and be allowed to apply their methods for treatment from the initial stages until full social reintegration, in order that their patients once again be considered useful and respected members of society despite their high level of disability. The scientific and social contribution of Dr. Guttman was instrumental in changing the prognosis of these individuals.

Furthermore, he added sports to the rehabilitation process, viewing it as therapy for its ability to restore strength, coordination, speed and endurance, as well as for its psychological and recreational value. In 1952, Dr. Guttman founded the World Paralympic sports movement.