

PALLIATIVE CARE

ripples

Updates on how INF is supporting Palliative Care development in Nepal

Community PC Workshop

50 enthusiastic participants gathered at a Pokhara church on October 29-30 for a 2-day community workshop on frail elderly and palliative care (PC). Facilitators were Dr Ruth with Manju (INFI), and Green Pastures Hospital (GPH) staff - Purna (PC worker) and Ruth (counsellor).

Aims were to increase understanding of a palliative approach, improve communication skills, understand about basic symptom management, grief and bereavement, and together learn about practical skills like caring for bed-ridden patients.

Participants came from 10 different churches and shared their current activities and thoughts about future directions.

Recent Events:

GPH celebrates International Hospice and Palliative Care Day

Highlighting the need to include palliative care in Universal Health Coverage (“don’t leave those suffering behind”) was the theme as GPH staff gathered to mark this annual event. This is an opportunity to encourage all staff to contribute toward providing holistic, patient-centred care. The PC program at GPH is funded through INFUK.



PC Teaching

Dr Ruth is teaching PC to 4th year BScNursing students at Manipal College Nov-Dec. This is a strategic opportunity to inspire these young women about holistic care and well-grounded palliative principles. The students have excellent head knowledge, but the challenge is to empower them to integrate and apply their knowledge.

INF celebrates 65 years

On 17 November INF marked 65 years of service in Nepal with celebrations at GPH.

PC links in India

Dr Dan attended the Emmanuel Hospitals Association palliative care meeting in Dehradun November 1-4. It was great to hear how their Palliative Care work is progressing and the impact of the love and care they show to the poorest and most marginalized in North India. Like us, they are looking at the place of palliative care in the whole spectrum of Non-Communicable Disease and we look forward to continuing our work with them in the future.



Palliative Care Research & Training Making a Difference:

Dan has overseen the PC needs assessment study, post-earthquake study, and training of Manju as a specialist PC nurse - all funded through EMMSI. Here we highlight some updates:

"Seeing PC in action was incredibly moving"

Recently Tony, from EMMSI, along with Philip, a supporter from Northern Ireland, visited Tansen, a busy 263-bed general hospital where Manju is piloting the first In-reach PC consultant service in Nepal. Tony reflects on his experience.....



"We were blown away by the palliative care work - the time, love and care shown to patients who had so little. I have heard that emotional or spiritual pain can be felt like physical pain, but seeing it made it more poignant. One woman with lung cancer, Maya (name changed to protect identity), arrived at the hospital crying out in pain, saying that she wanted to die. In the consultation room, I expected her to be immediately prescribed more pain relief. Instead, she was skillfully listened to by Manju, and her mentor, Dr Dan. Listening and understanding was a form of pain relief and Maya's body language changed from uptight and in agony to peaceful and calm. It was a powerful illustration of the power of holistic palliative care, and a stark reminder of how much can be achieved in Nepal with so little."

Research update/ activities

With colleagues in India and several African countries we are developing the Supportive and Palliative Care Indicator Tool (SPICT) for low-income settings, to help identify patients who need palliative care. In February Ruth, Manju and Dan will attend the SPICT conference in Edinburgh when the new version will hopefully be ready for launch. We will also attend a conference in London on the Palliative Care Outcome Scale (POS) which we are translating into Nepali. Later in February we will present our SPICT and post-earthquake work at the Indian PC Congress in Delhi.

We are surveying all doctors with a MD(GP) degree in Nepal to explore their experience and views on treating patients with non-communicable diseases. This will help in health service planning to achieve Universal Health Coverage, including palliative care, which Nepal has committed to deliver by 2030. The survey was launched at the WONCA (International Family Practice Organisation) South Asian Conference held in Kathmandu November 25-26. For publicity we had special badges for delegates. They were so popular, when we ran out, Dan had to give his away to a crestfallen GP who did not have one!



Dan and Ruth have written a PC article for Christian Journal for Global Health <http://journal.cjgh.org/index.php/cjgh/issue/current>



Prayer and Praise Points:

Give thanks for

- Survey with MDGPs across Nepal in exploring their care for patients with chronic illness
- Purna and Manju's ongoing work with people in western Nepal needing palliative care
- St Columba's Hospice, Edinburgh offering Manju an attachment to work with UK specialist nurses

Please pray for

- Plans for ongoing palliative care development as current projects are completed.
- Good professional links and safe travelling for the team visiting UK, and that Manju and St Columba's will benefit from her visit resulting in blessing for patients in both Nepal and Scotland

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