

The Peter A. Silverman Centre for International Health
Global Health Digest

Issue 15: June 1-30, 2009



Canada-Israel Nursing Exchange 2009



On May 13th, Mary Agnes Beduz presented a review of her trip to Israel for the monthly Global Health Discussion Forum. Mary Agnes and Leslie Vincent visited Israel in April to help establish a potential nursing exchange program between Mount Sinai Hospital and Israeli healthcare institutions. More specifically, the trip was designed to gain exposure to the Israeli healthcare system, and the nursing profession. Areas of interest that were explored included basic nursing education, integration of new graduates, leadership development, professional development, advanced educational strategies, and nursing research opportunities. Mary Agnes and Leslie visited 3 medical centres (including the E. Wolfson Medical Centre and the Chaim Sheba Medical Centre) the E. Wolfson Academic Nursing School, and the National Medical Simulation Centre. Impressed by the technological proficiency and patient intake capacity of each centre, as well as their incredibly attentive healthcare workers, Mary Agnes expressed desired to move forward with an exchange program by having Israeli nursing leaders visit Toronto.

Thank you to both Mary Agnes and Leslie Vincent for their wonderful work overseas!

GLOBAL HEALTH EVENTS:

June 15, 2009

Treatment of Childhood Nutrition in High-Burden Settings

Presented by:

Centre for International Health (Dalla Lana School of Public Health)
Médecins Sans Frontières
Sick Kids International
PACSIH

4-530pm

Daniels Hollywood Theatre, Sick Kids
1st Floor, Black Wing, Room1246
555 University Avenue

Elayna.Fremes@gmail.com

June 17, 2009

Global Health Discussion Forum
with authors Anne-Emmanuelle Birn and Timothy H. Holtz

12-1PM

Sick Kids Intl: 525 University Ave, 7th floor
RSVP to Dylan.walters@sickkids.ca
*Brown bag lunch

“Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world.”

- Nelson Mandela

Report from the field: Guyana Medical Mission

By:

Dr. Dennis Scolnik

Program Co-Director, and PASCIH Global Health Scholar



This two week medical and research mission was undertaken under the auspices of the Peter A Silverman Centre for International Health at the Mt. Sinai Hospital, Toronto, with the assistance of Partners in Health, the Lion's Club of Guyana, Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee, and with the full knowledge and support of the Guyanese Ministry of Health and Ministry of Amerindian Affairs. The trip visited Aishalton, Awarewanau, Mururanau, Shea and St. Ignatius—five villages in South West Guyana, and saw 175-300 people a day. In total 1634 children and adults were examined and/or treated. Ten Canadians, made up of an infectious disease specialist, a cardiologist, a paediatrician, three paediatric residents, an echocardiographer, two nurses and a non-medical volunteer and two Guyanese, both Lions Club members who joined as ground support, cook, and translator, collaborated in the organization of the trip funded by individual participants.

Flying via Port of Spain in Trinidad and Tobago, the Canadian team was met in Georgetown, capital of Guyana, by Shabir Hussein the President of the Lion's Club for Guyana and all of the Caribbean, and 'Skip' Lloyd Garraway, the President of the Lion's Club in Bartica. After a quick breakfast at Mr. Hussein's house the team flew from Ogle Airport in Georgetown to Lethem. The team brought tents and camping supplies and prepared their own water. Four wheel drive vehicles were hired to take them on to villages where clinics were organized to screen all nursery and school children in each community. Children were brought to the clinics by their teachers and/or parents, and each child underwent a full physical examination followed by a dose of anti-worm medicine and enough vitamins to supply a two year amount of vitamin A aimed at reducing morbidity and mortality from infectious diseases such as pneumonia and gastroenteritis. In addition, any sick adults or smaller children living in the community were seen in the clinic.

A random sample of one in every three or four older children was approached for consent to undergo cardiac echocardiography as part of a research project to ascertain the prevalence and severity of rheumatic heart disease in Guyana. Several children were identified with significant congenital heart disease as incidental findings including four with patent ductus arteriosus, and one each with bicuspid aortic valve and ventricular septal defect. The other research projects consisted of detailed sampling of longstanding ulcers to help ascertain the aetiology of tropical ulcer, and to obtain samples of yaws lesions to probe similarities to diseases such as syphilis and explore the possible development of vaccines for these illnesses.

A few extremely ill patients were seen and treated, and several others were referred to regional centres for ongoing care. At the end of the trip a meeting was held with the Minister of Health who asked for the list of these referrals as he indicated he would like to try and ensure appropriate follow up occurs. Some of the paediatric residents are intending to compile data on the heights and weights of all children seen to compare to national and international averages and to draw conclusions on the adequacy of nutrition.

The trip identified the provision of eyeglasses and dental care as ongoing needs that could be relatively easily addressed by aid workers over a relatively short span on future trips. Addressing the water needs of local communities could vastly improve the daily lives of villagers, especially women and children over the longer term. Many clinic attendees felt that provision of free and confidential family planning services would be invaluable to both the men and the women of the community.

Global Health News

WHO, IAEA Join Forces to Fight Cancer in Developing Countries

Source: WHO

On May 26, the WHO and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) announced their partnership in the Joint Programme on Cancer Control (JPCC). Cancer currently accounts for over 7.4 million deaths worldwide (or 13% of total mortality). Yet, if current knowledge was put into practice, at least one third of cancer could be prevented, and another third could be detected early, treated and cured. Such improvements would have an incredible impact on suffering worldwide. To date, the IAEA has provided radiation technology to cancer patients in developing countries for many years. However, it has become apparent that radiotherapy alone cannot stop the growing mortality rate that is caused by cancer. The Joint Programme on Cancer Control therefore represents a groundbreaking effort to establish a more integrated approach to care and control of the disease. The roles of the IAEA and the WHO will be complimentary in nature. The WHO will act as the directing and coordinating agency for cancer care and health strategies within the UN system, while the IAEA will provide expertise in radiation medicine which will be vital to diagnosis and treatment programmes. It is hoped that this dynamic partnership will bring about the necessary positive outcomes in cancer reduction through sustainable control programmes in middle and low-income countries. The JPCC will initially focus its efforts on six model demonstration sites in Albania, Nicaragua, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Viet Nam and Yemen.

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