Chairpersons report for the Acute Pain Committee of WFSA

Milton Raff

This Committee has continued with the goals decided upon during the last meeting in Buenos Aires. It was unanimously accepted that we would prioritise pain education and the mainstay of this effort would be to promote the EPM (Essential Pain Management program).

As stated in my report of 2013, this programme has been rolled out on all the continents with priority being given to developing countries. I shall not repeat all of the sites as listed last year but will rather focus on recent initiatives.

I must express my appreciation to all the volunteer educators from the international community who have given of their time and expertise to ensure that the programme would succeed. My special thanks must go to Roger Goucke and Wayne Morriss whose enthusiasm and dedication has ensured the expansion of the programme. My further thanks to all the “sister” organisations that have contributed financially as well as logistically and once again I must single out the ANZCAC group for their effort and support in this regard.

Recent EPM Courses

The most recent courses have been run in Manila, Ulan Batar and Hanoi.

EPM has been run in Mongolia since 2010, in conjunction with the Mongolian Society of Anaesthetists (MSA). The MSA now plans to run more courses in major Ulanbatar hospitals and also in the Aimagts. The MSA are now in a position to take over the running of EPM in Mongolia.

The Pain Society of the Philippines and the University of Santo Tomas facilitated the first EPM course in Manila during early August. Since then plans have been developed by the Pain Society to run more courses in Manila and there is progress for introducing EPM Lite at ASEAPs in March 2015 (see later)

EPM returned to Hanoi through the auspices of the Hanoi Medical university, the program can now be taught in Vietnamese by local instructors. Plans are being developed to run EPM in a rural area of northern Vietnam and the potential for EPM Lite for undergraduates is being explored.

EPM Lite

With increasing interest in undergraduate education (both medical and nursing) a version of EPM called EPM Lite has been developed for undergraduate education. It can be delivered over a 4 hour period. EPM Lite has been pioneered at the Auckland University, New Zealand Medical Undergraduate Program. It is also been modified by Monash University who are using it for their pre-intern teaching. Our thanks go out to all these institutions for their belief in the programme.
EPM Lite will be presented at the ASEAPS Pain Camp in the Philippines in March 2015.

Further courses are planned for Myanmar, Laos and PNG Bangladesh, India, Tanzania, Czech Republic, in early 2015 while Serbia has been planned for late 2015.

Full EPM reports are available from www.essentialpainmanagement.org.


The EPM team are currently working with a developer on an EPM App for smartphones (Apple and Android). A basic mock-up has been produced and will be refined over the next few months. The app will include suggested treatments based on the assessment of a patient’s pain as well as a detailed adult and paediatric pain drug formularies.

The African Pain Fellowship

WFSA together with the IASP are supporting a 3-month fellowship for African doctors interested in learning about pain. I am pleased to report that in 2014 South Africa hosted two pain fellows, one each from Tanzania and Nigeria. This has proven very successful and three fellows will be accepted in 2015. My thanks to Eva Frolich, Sean Chetty (Johannesburg) and Rene Krause and the St. Lukes Hospice team (Cape Town) for their contribution to the success of this programme.

The Committee shall continue to support the EPM programme as well as the African Pain Fellowship for the next year until we reconvene in Hong Kong. My thanks to the WFSA and IASP executive committees for their faith and belief in the Acute Pain Committee. Finally, a very sincere thank you to all the members of this Committee whose contributions have ensured that our aims and goals have not only been achieved but have actually been exceeded.
EPM delegates in Samoa

Micronesia delegates
Myanmar doctors and nurse instruction
Dr NNajj from Nigeria with Dr Raff
African Pain Fellow Dr Malumba from Tanzania