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Pain, palliative medicine and hospice care: Learning from each other

Instructors

Jo Eland (joann-eland@uiowa.edu) and

M. R. Rajagopal Pallium India (mrraj47@gmail.com)

Mr. Cory Petersen, Educational Support Specialist and Advisor, 335-0353,
cory-petersen@uiowa.edu

Prof. Raj Rajagopal, Director, India Winterim Program, 319-594-9442,
r-rajagopal@uiowa.edu

Course Outline

The Course: This course will explore the development and delivery of Hospice Care in North America and India, as well as including examples from other countries and models in order to expand on the possibilities of treatment. The course will be presented in a part of the world which has experienced massive development in hospice palliative care under the direction of Dr. M.R. Rajagopal. In this course the student will learn the principles and practices of hospice palliative care: understand the needs of the dying; learn communication skills specific to the needs of people at the end of life and those people close to them; and expand awareness of alternative approaches to the medical model and spirituality and how it affects those who are constantly exposed to this field of work. Forms and assessment tools will be introduced which are necessary to determine patient needs. The student will gain knowledge and expanded awareness of the dying and grief journey. Students in this course truly have an immersion experience as they have didactic classroom work, hospital rounds on the palliative care unit and home visits. The extraordinary individuals who make up Pallium India welcome our students with open arms and open their minds to the entire experience of living with cancer in the context of poverty. Dr. Raj and myself are the primary instructors but students are also taught by the other physicians, the social worker and physiotherapist. They attend in house medical rounds in the hospice, out patient clinics and perhaps most significant of all home visits. Every single student to a person has stated that their life had been forever changed by the experience in India. This is a very intense experience with eight hour lecture days

six days a week and a minimum of eight hour home visits on a number of occasions.

Home Visits

Home visits represent six days of our fifteen days of class time and have a profound effect on the students (and me). An example of a day with home visits will provide clarity for what the students experience and what further defines cultural immersion for the students. On one day the group I was with had a nurse led team and saw four patients in one location: a 96 year old man with hypertension who walks 5 km a day, a gentleman in his 50's recently paraplegic after a construction accident, a 50 year old lady with diabetes and hypertension and a young woman in her 30's who had meningitis when she was ten and is developmentally delayed. Our second stop though probably had the most impact on all of us. We were welcomed into a home where six adults and one infant live. Our patient was a 28 year old woman who had been in a motor vehicle accident and was paraplegic (meaning she had no function below her waist). We were there to change her urinary catheter and insure that her pain was under excellent control. We had been there probably fifteen minutes and the mother of the infant had gone to the store and purchased soda for us, the honored guests. This is a family that exists on less than \$100. US per month. Their meal *for the day* was cut up tapioca root boiled in water to make a soup with a little chili powder. How can one not be profoundly affected by such an act of kindness? We also saw a number of gentleman whose faces were profoundly disfigured from cancer secondary to their smoking. In the US we sometimes see some disfigurement but it's usually from a surgeon's scalpel but in India the disease is still quite active. Likewise we also saw two ladies with fulminating breast cancer tumors having never received treatment for their disease and were now dying. Their husbands had left them because of their fear that the cancer would spread to them.

At the end of these home visit days (each student did six days) we met at our hotel to debrief as these visits had predictably a profound impact on the students. Students are also required to write a blog of every day's experiences to which I respond within 24 hours.

UI Instructor: Dr. Joann Eland

For the past 39 years, Dr. Eland has been investigating the concept of pain from both a research and clinical perspective. She is nationally and internationally known for her work in the area of children's pain and was a member of the WHO Panel that wrote the guidelines for the control of children's pain for the world's children. Her commitment to the topic has resulted in over 800 national

presentations outside of the State of Iowa on the topic. In 1997 she received the first ever Jeffery Lawson Award for Advocacy in Children's Pain from the American Pain Society. In 2001 she received one of Sigma Theta Tau's highest honors, The Audrey Hepburn Award, for her international work with children's pain. In 2003 Children's Hospice International awarded her the Robert A. Milch award for her work in Palliative Pain and Symptom Management. Since 1989 she has worked with Foundation of Livia Benini based in Florence, Italy to further the management of children's pain in Italy. Currently she is the Immediate Past President of the American Society for Pain Management Nursing. She has taught the proposed course three times previously with Dr. Rajagopal.

Partner Organization

Our sponsors in Trivandrum, Kerala (India) will be Pallium India (PI) and Trivandrum Institute of Palliative Sciences (TIPS)

<http://www.palliumindia.org/tvminstiute.htm> and PI's founder DR. M.R. Rajagopal. Dr. MRR is a professor of Pain and Palliative Medicine at the SUT Academy of Medical Sciences, Trivandrum, Kerala, India. He is also the Founder-Chairman of Pallium India (Trust). Pallium India was founded in 2003 to reach palliative care to those areas which have little access to it. Pallium India projects have, in the last four years, resulted in the development of two palliative care training centers (Trivandrum and Hyderabad), several palliative care centers in North and Northeast India and a network of palliative care centers in South Kerala. In addition to Pallium India, Dr Rajagopal was one of the founders of Pain and Palliative Care Society in Calicut, which was formed in 1993, and which later became a WHO demonstration project, and grew to the present Institute of Palliative Medicine and a network of about 140 palliative care centers in the state of Kerala. He was awarded the Marie Nyswander Award from the International Association for Pain and Chemical Dependency received on 30 October 2008. Most recently Pallium India has been named a World Health Organization Collaborating Center for Training and Policy on Access to Cancer Pain.

Upon completion of the course the student will:

- 1) Describe, compare and contrast pain & palliative care in North America and Trivandrum, Kerala.
- 2) Identify the differences in the management of pain from North America where much of the treatment is pharmacological based and Trivandrum, Kerala where fewer pharmacological based interventions are available.

- 3) Explore the psychological and spiritual dimensions of pain as expressed in the Kerala culture.
- 4) Identify the various barriers to improved pain and symptom management in North America and India.
- 5) Identify the regulatory barriers to improving pain and symptom management in India and specifically Trivandrum, Kerala.
- 6) Describe the effect of culture on the experience of pain and death in both settings.
- 7) The student will appreciate the immersion in a culture for three weeks that is far different from their own culture.

Requirements

- 1) The students will complete a daily blog of reflections of their experiences when doing home visits.
- 2) The students will make a presentation at the end of the experience on a topic of their choice related to the India Experience.

Course Content

1. Concept of palliative care
2. Pain: Mechanism; assessment; management.
3. Opioid availability & advancing palliative care
4. Symptoms other than pain
5. Communication with patient and family
6. Psycho-social support
7. Spirituality and spiritual care
8. Pain and Palliative care in children
9. End-of-life care
10. Grief and loss
11. Transcultural issues
12. Team work
13. Self-care
14. Medical Ethics

Reading list will be available later in the Fall Semester.

Professor Eland's Blog of the 2012-2013 Trip would give you an idea of what the trip was about on a daily basis. http://elandphoto.com/India_Blog/

For more Information:

The India Winterim program application is available on the Study Abroad web site (under the “Application” tab):

<http://study-abroad.uiowa.edu/programs/details/index.php?crse=197#application>

The application deadline is **Friday, September 27th at 5:00 PM**. Applications must be submitted in-person to the Study Abroad office’s front desk in 1111 UCC.

Contact Professor Jo Eland at joann-eland@uiowa.edu

For information about financial aid possibilities, go to

<http://international.uiowa.edu/study-abroad/financial-aid> and click on either “undergraduate scholarships” or “graduate fellowships.”