

AIHA Directions

Healthy Communities Partnerships Launched in Slovakia

AIHA and USAID have established two new partnerships to promote healthy communities in Slovakia. One of the partnerships will focus on healthy lifestyles and drug abuse prevention among youth in Petržalka, a densely populated region of the capital city of Bratislava. Representatives from the partner institutions--Truman Medical Center in Kansas City, MO, and the Aid to Children at Risk Foundation and Institute of Preventive and Clinical Medicine in Bratislava--met in October for a healthy communities workshop and to begin developing a needs assessment. They will meet in Kansas City in January to sign the memorandum of understanding (MOU) formalizing the partnership.

The second partnership will promote healthy lifestyles among the residents of Turčianske Teplice, a town of about 7,200 people in the Turiec Region of central Slovakia. The office of mayor will represent the town in a partnership with the MetroHealth System of greater Cleveland, OH, which has a population of about two million. The chief of the town office and three representatives from the town health council will travel to Cleveland in January to sign the MOU and develop the work plan for the partnership.

"Even with the different sizes of our communities, we both have some of the same problems. I think people are basically the same everywhere," Turčianske Teplice Mayor Alena Chlapíková said at the initial meeting with the partnership in October 1995. "We are looking forward to working together and feel there will definitely be positive results."

The Spring 1996 issue of *CommonHealth* will take an in-depth look at healthy communities initiatives.

Computer Training Seminars Held

In December, AIHA sponsored a series of technology and information resources seminars for the newly appointed information coordinators from each NIS partnership. The coordinators received training on the use of e-mail and the Internet and learned how to apply these technologies to further the goals of their partnerships. Participants discussed a variety of applications, ranging from the use of e-mail to communicate and exchange information to ideas for conducting clinical consultations by sending medical images through the Internet.

The two-day seminars were conducted by AIHA Clearinghouse Director Mark Storey. Seminar participants are responsible for developing learning resource centers in their partnership institutions.

AIHA Video Enhances Nursing Program

Senior nurse leaders from every NIS hospital partnership had something extra to share with their colleagues after this year's annual NIS partnership conference. Each nurse representative who attended the conference received a video of highlights from the AIHA Nursing Conference held in Moscow, Russia in April 1995.

"We hope that each nurse will share this video with their nursing colleagues at home as well as chief physicians and health ministries in an effort to reaffirm the significant role that nurses play as members of the health care team," said Sharon Weinstein, RN, CRNI, director of the Office of International Affairs at AmHS/Premier Health Alliance, Inc. and AIHA partnership coordinator. Weinstein was instrumental in developing the nursing video.

The 40-minute video, which promotes exchange among senior nurse leaders in the NIS, includes the nursing creed and nurse leadership goals. It is available in English and Russian versions. USAID/AIHA, Baxter Healthcare, Abbott Laboratories and Johnson & Johnson provided funding for the video.

Talking About Turkmenistan

At a United Nations reception following the designation of Turkmenistan as a neutral country in Central Asia, AIHA's Curtiss Swezy discussed AIHA's NIS work with UN Mission representatives from Ukraine, Moldova and Kyrgyzstan.

At the November event, Turkmen Ambassador Aksoltan Ataeva, formerly the Turkmen Minister of Health, promoted the Ashgabat-Cleveland, OH partnership, which he helped create in 1993.

"The AIHA partnership has had a significant impact on improving the quality of care provided by staff of the Medical Consultative Center in the Name of President Niyazov in Ashgabat. We are very appreciative of the clinic's senior professionals who have donated their time to this effort and look forward to continuing and expanding the activities of this partnership," Ataeva said.

NIS Nursing Conference Stresses Infection Control

The Moscow-Boston partnership hosted its second annual nursing conference at Pirogov First Municipal Hospital in Moscow last November. Entitled "Professional Issues in Nursing," this two-day continuing education conference renewed last year's dialogue on nursing roles in infection control practices.

Nine faculty members from Pirogov Hospital and Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, MA lead discussions for an audience of more than 150 nurses, including two nurse representatives from each NIS hospital partnership. Throughout the conference, nurses shared ideas on existing partnership nurse training programs and addressed common concerns.

"Medical technology has developed to the extent that critically ill patients who previously would have succumbed to their underlying illness are surviving in great numbers," said Karyl Davenport, MS, RN, nurse manager of the Trauma/Burn Unit at Brigham and Women's Hospital. "We as nurses must be aware of infection control problems so that we can take steps to reduce the complications of infection."

CEE Nursing Task Force Committee Meets in Washington

The steering committee for AIHA's CEE Nursing Task Force met last December in Washington, DC, to review goals and objectives and to plan upcoming activities. The committee, which is composed of US representatives from eight hospital partnerships, made preliminary plans for a CEE Nursing Task Force meeting that will be held on April 30 in conjunction with the CEE partnership conference in Budapest.

Committee members described the nursing initiatives of their respective partnerships and discussed the unique challenges faced by nurses in their CEE partner institutions. The next committee meeting is scheduled to take place on February 12 in Lebanon, NH, and will likely include nursing representatives from the healthy communities and health management education partnerships that were recently formed in CEE.