

## Partnership Works

### **Zagreb-Lebanon**

More than 20 Croatian health administrators gathered in Trakoscan, Croatia last October for a leadership development workshop sponsored by the Zagreb-Lebanon partnership. The goal of the workshop was to enable health care leaders to develop the leadership and management skills necessary to promote sustainable change in their organizations and the larger health care system.

Faculty from Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in Lebanon, NH presented ideas on various aspects of health care leadership, including managing people, team building, interpersonal communication, leadership processes, measuring and monitoring work, improving work and managing change. During break-out sessions, participants practiced specific leadership skills, which they were encouraged to apply in real work settings upon their return home.

After returning to her institution, Tatjana Jeren, PhD, coordinator of diagnostics at the Mihaljevic Clinic of Infectious Diseases in Zagreb, said, "I started to persuade our employees to make some necessary changes to achieve general progress." Jeren said she is teaching them that all employees must be accountable for their job performance and that everyone is important in the working process. She also stresses the importance of setting clear goals and developing a systematic plan for reaching them.

### **Tirana-Bronx**

The Tirana-Bronx partnership conducted a conference on obstetrics, neonatology and obstetrical anesthesia in Tirana, Albania, December 4-6, 1995. Co-sponsored by Jacobi Medical Center in Bronx, NY and the Maternity House in Tirana, the conference brought together health professionals and administrators from health care facilities throughout Albania.

In her opening address to more than 100 physicians, midwives and nurses, Lorraine Tregde, Senior Vice President of the North Bronx Healthcare Network in the Bronx, NY (of which Jacobi is a member facility), presented ideas on "Improving Perinatal Outcomes: A Framework for Success." She stressed the importance of team care, continuity of care from ambulatory to inpatient services, counseling and education, informed consent and quality monitoring.

Each day of the conference focused on a perinatal issue that had been identified as problematic by the Albanian partners, including premature births, pregnancy-induced hypertension and diabetes in pregnancy. Conference participants explored various aspects of each problem, such as epidemiology, identification and treatment, the role of midwifery/nursing and neonatal care. Problems that anesthesiologists face with patients who have hypertension were also discussed. Each topic was addressed from the perspective of both the Albanians and the Americans. In addition, the American partners provided updates on research findings.

Every afternoon, conference participants broke into small groups to discuss case studies related to the day's theme. Representatives from each group presented a summary of these discussions and recommendations during a general session at the end of the day.

The conference concluded with a closing address entitled "Obstetrics in the 21st Century: The Albanian View," presented by Zhani Treska, MD, director of the Maternity House in Tirana.

### **Minsk-Pittsburgh**

Late last year when a young girl in Minsk, Belarus overdosed on carbamazepine, a common antiseizure medication, Pittsburgh Poison Center Director Edward Krenzelok received a plea for assistance from his NIS partner, Gennady Eshov.

Krenzelok and Eshov were able to find a treatment within a matter of minutes, thanks to modern technology. Relying on the PoisIndex, a US computer database used by both partners that stores thousands of pages of information on toxins, the partners quickly identified the most effective treatments to neutralize the drug. Krenzelok then recommended that of the two choices of treatment listed by PoisIndex, hemoperfusion would be more effective than activated charcoal. The girl's life was saved.

"That is what this partnership is all about. I know this program has had an impact, and it is because [our partners] are working hard to produce such positive results" said Krenzelok. "They see some things that we rarely see, like serious mushroom poisonings. And, then, there are a lot of things that they learn from us."

The Minsk Poison Center, which was created under the auspices of the AIHA partnership program, continues to function as a regional poison referral center, receiving calls daily from other hospitals and ambulance staff seeking advice or requesting permission to bring children to Children's Hospital No. 4 for treatment. The center relies on the PoisIndex for information on drugs new to the market in the NIS.

### **L'viv--Detroit**

"It takes two hands to clap and produce a good sound," said Gsudhakar Zuhthachan, MD, Division Head of Neonatology, explaining the L'viv-Detroit partnership's teamwork in the area of neonatology--a key component of the partnership. That message was the theme of a partnership poster displayed at the US 1995 National Neonatology Conference in Washington, DC in November by partners from the L'viv Oblast Clinical Hospital (LOCH) in Ukraine and Detroit's Henry Ford Health Systems (HFHS). Attended by more than 300 US neonatologists, the conference provided partners with an opportunity to discuss advances in their field.

"We're making great inroads in neonatology," said Dmytro Dobriansky, MD, PhD, chief of Neonatal Service in the L'viv Oblast and assistant school director and neonatal resuscitation program coordinator at LOCH in a presentation at AIHA headquarters in Washington before the conference.

In just nine months of 1995, neonatologists counted 1,691 registered cases of asphyxia among L'viv Oblast's 28,000 newborns. The most effective treatment of asphyxia is resuscitation, and the partnership reported that progress that resulted from the on-the-job training program, which provides neonatologists and nurses in the hospital and surrounding hospitals with instruction in inexpensive, low-tech resuscitation techniques.

"From the very beginning of our program we recognized the need to train both neonatologists and nurses...because this important collaboration is a crucial component to care," explained Zorianna Salabay, MD, Neonatologist at LOCH.

Collaboration was especially important last year when an asphyxiated infant needed resuscitation. Recognizing what treatment was necessary, senior nurse Olla Vlad walked doctors through an intubation procedure that she learned during her recent training with partners at Henry Ford, and the baby's life was saved.

The partners are also outfitting LOCH's intensive care unit with needed equipment. Christine Newman, MSN, RNC, a clinical nurse specialist at Henry Ford, and colleagues from the neonatology department collected enough medical equipment from the Detroit medical community to fill a 40-foot container, which was shipped to L'viv in December. Equipment included infant warmers, fetal monitors and blood pressure machines.

"People all over are passing the word," noted Newman. "Now there is a large network of people out there who know about our program."

### **Pirogov-Brigham and Women's**

Members of the Pirogov-Brigham and Women's partnership participated in a December workshop entitled "U.S.-Russian Initiatives in Health Care" at the US-Russia Chamber of Commerce of Boston, Inc. More than 50 representatives from the health service and delivery community in Massachusetts attended the workshop. Other participants included Hewlett-Packard, Abt Associates, Inc. and Harvard Medical School.

Rosemarie Maddi, from the anesthesiology department at Brigham and Women's Hospital and John Davies, MD, an orthopedic surgeon at Harvard Community Health Plan, discussed their hospital partnership with Pirogov Hospital in Moscow, Russia, which has been active since 1992. Maddi explained the importance of peer-to-peer training at Pirogov and noted the assistance that businesses can provide to their program through donations of medical supplies and equipment.

"It is long overdue that we address the important issue of health care in the NIS," said Suzanne Kohl of the US-Russia Chamber of Commerce of Boston. "There is a lot of potential to get more health-oriented companies from Massachusetts involved."

### **Semipalatinsk-Houston**

Semipalatinsk, Kazakstan Governor Galamzan Jakianov met with US partners at Methodist Hospital and the Baylor College of Medicine during his October visit to Texas. His visit to the US, which included a meeting with Texas Governor George W. Bush, was sponsored by the General Board of the Global Ministries of the Methodist Church, which is one of the participating US partners.

Familiar with the partnership goals and areas of focus from previous briefings, the governors cited an interest in receiving ongoing updates on the initiatives, including nursing education, of the hospital partnership between Semipalatinsk and Houston.

Since it began a year ago, the partnership has created model nursing units at each hospital in Semipalatinsk to encourage expanded nursing roles. Last October, partners from Semipalatinsk hosted a five-day regional nursing education conference on patient assessment, staff development and management skills for more than 140 nurses from Semipalatinsk hospitals. Houston partners prepared and distributed Russian-language brochures on preventive medicine topics ranging from breast self-examination to smoking cessation.

"Our goal was to stimulate an exchange of information among nurses," explained Patricia Hercules, RN, MS, manager of nursing support and education at Methodist Hospital. "This was one of the few opportunities for nurses from the various departments to get together and discuss common problems and offer solutions," she said.

The Semipalatinsk-Houston partners continue to develop a disaster preparedness and community outreach program at the Kurchatov Regional Diagnostic Center in Kurchatov, Kazakstan. The region is the site of an estimated 500 nuclear tests--more than 100 of which took place above ground. This program augments partnership initiatives to create a tumor registry and cancer screening program that evaluate the long-term effects of radiation exposure.

### **LaCrosse-Dubna**

Members of the LaCrosse, WI health care community won the 1995 Christian Mission Award last October for their work in diabetes education and treatment in Dubna, Russia. The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration presented the award to Gunderson Lutheran Hospital, Franciscan Skemp Clinic, Sandra McCormick--who coordinates the LaCrosse-Dubna partnership at Lutheran Hospital--and to the family of Walter Vallejo, MD, an endocrinologist at the Skemp Clinic, who was instrumental in shaping the project and who died last summer.

The award honors the progress the Dubna diabetes center has made as well as its selection by an international health committee overseen by US Vice President Al Gore and Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to serve as a model at five other sites in Russia. The Franciscan Sisters chose the Dubna project and an Iowa hospital for recognition from projects in a range of fields throughout the Midwest.

"We are impressed with the profound long-range effects on all of Russia of the Dubna diabetes project," said Sister Celesta Day, director of mission effectiveness for the Franciscan Sisters. "We feel their work is very encouraging for people who want to reach out."

In October, the Dubna clinic was dedicated to Vallejo. "He touched my heart and taught me to look forward and to be creative," said Olga Tarasova, MD, chief physician at the Bolshaya Volga Hospital in Dubna, of Vallejo's inspiration for the project. "He said to us, 'Use everything in your power to educate your staff and patients. Do it. Don't say that you can't.'"