

Essential Pain Management: Five years in five continents



EPM by the numbers

Over the past 15 years there have been:

- 173 EPM programs.
- 41 countries.
- 4770-plus participants.
- 56 instructor courses.
- 783 instructors trained.

Essential Pain Management (EPM) program instructors met at ANZCA house in Melbourne from July 24-26 to mark the fifth anniversary of EPM with a workshop designed to review the program's materials, planning and delivery.

The group of 15 experienced instructors reviewed the first five years of the program to date and reflected on the lessons learned from running programs across five continents. Monitoring and evaluation was a key focus with participants challenged to develop methods to demonstrate how the program was "improving lives around the world by training health workers to recognise, assess and treat pain".

EPM is a cost-effective, multi-disciplinary program working with health workers to improve pain knowledge, implement a simple framework for managing pain and addressing pain management barriers. From 2010 to June 30, 2015, 173 EPM programs have been organised in 41 countries, with over 4770 participants.

The program uses a train-the-trainer model which has seen 56 instructor courses training 783 instructors around the world. This model has been highly successful in providing educational tools and skills to local EPM champions with an interest in improving pain management. The program materials are made available under a creative commons license from www.essentialpainmanagement.org.

In partnership with the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland, information about EPM programs are now available on the Global Anaesthesia Partnerships Map www.aagbi.org/international/thet which provides information regarding collaborative anaesthetic projects in low and middle income countries.

EPM is governed by the EPM Subcommittee which has adopted a regional management approach. With membership from Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, England and Honduras regional EPM champions have been able to further devolve the program.

In March, Dr Mary Cardosa and Dr Linda Huggins ran a program at the International Association for the Study of Pain Camp at Tagaytay Philippines with representatives from ten South East Asian countries.

In May, Dr Carolina Haylock Loo and Dr Juan Duarte ran the first South American program in Ecuador with representatives of anaesthesia societies from South American countries. These programs provided excellent opportunities to profile EPM leading to additional requests for new courses in the region.

Workshop participants reviewed the communications methods used to stay in touch and support the local EPM champions and the opportunities to provide them additional mentoring and support.

"In May, Dr Carolina Haylock Loo and Dr Juan Duarte ran the first South American program in Ecuador."

The workshop also provided an opportunity to analyse delivery of the program, assessing activities providing the most value, least value and what could be added to improve the running of the course.

Different approaches and experience with adult education were identified across many of the countries in which EPM operates. There was significant focus on the methods best suited to outcome evaluation, the group agreed to explore the place of quantitative assessments for EPM. The next 12 months will see workshop participants busy, refining and developing new materials to continue to improve EPM.

The EPM instructors' workshop program was supported by ANZCA and a grant from the Ronald Geoffrey Arnott Trust managed by Perpetual Trustees.

Associate Professor Roger Goucke
Chair, Essential Pain Management Subcommittee

Clockwise from top: The EPM team stops to take a photo; The course under review most value, least value and new; Maurice Hennessy leading a session on improving program delivery.

Simulators donated to PNG



Papua New Guinea has received its first anaesthesia simulator. The medical director of iSimulate (www.isimulate.com), Dr Anthony Lewis, donated the iSimulate equipment following discussions with ANZCA's Overseas Aid Committee.

"Simulation is incredibly valuable to clinical training at all levels but especially in developing countries," the chair of ANZCA's Overseas Aid Committee, Dr Michael Cooper, said.

"It is particularly suitable for such a rugged country as PNG as it can be carried as hand luggage with a mannequin and then can be set up at any one of the remote 22 provincial hospitals in the country."

The presentation was made at the Port Moresby General Hospital on July 21 and was followed by a clinical demonstration in the recovery ward of the main operating theatres, where Dr Roni Krieser from the Royal Melbourne Hospital took Dr George Tade and Dr Lian Painap through a very realistic scenario.

The College joined author Dr David Borshoff, from Perth, in donating 40 copies of the Anaesthesia Crisis Manual. "These manuals are invaluable and let the trainee learn how to deal with scenarios that occur with each emergency simulation," Dr Cooper said.

In early September, Dr Chris Acott presented a Dexter airway simulator to PNG anaesthetists at the PNG Medical Symposium in Port Moresby. The simulator is used to teach fibre-optic skills and was donated by Dr Colin Marsland, from New Zealand.

Above from top: From left, Dr Roni Krieser, senior anaesthetist Royal Melbourne Hospital, Dr Nora Dai, deputy chief anaesthetist, PNG, Dr Michael Cooper, chair, Overseas Aid Committee and Dr Harry Aigeeleng, president, Society of Anaesthetists of PNG; Dr Roni Krieser leading a realistic scenario with Dr Lian Painap and Dr George Tade; from left, Dr Violet Rangap, Dr George Tade, Dr Alu Kali, Dr Roni Krieser and Dr Michael Cooper.

Scholarship winner sets up pain clinic in Nairobi



Within six months of returning to Kenya from Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Perth, Dr Timothy Murithi Mwitii had helped start the first pain management services for Kenyatta National Hospital and The Mater Hospital in Nairobi.

Dr Mwitii, who received the ANZCA International Scholarship in 2014, spent six months in Perth to develop skills in pain medicine, a discipline he says is desperately under resourced in his home country of Kenya.

It was during and after his postgraduate training in anaesthesia and critical care that he developed a keen interest in pain management.

"There is little in-depth teaching and training in pain in most of the healthcare personnel training programs in Kenya," Dr Mwitii said.

"This has resulted poor pain recognition, assessment and treatment of all types of pain."

Under the tutelage of Dr Roger Goucke, Dr Max Majedi, Dr Chin-Wern Chan and Dr Mark Schutze, Dr Mwitii gained experience in the role of psychosocial input in the total pain perception, pain behaviours, detection and diagnoses of different types of pain and pain syndromes, rational use of imaging and laboratory investigations in pain management.

This has translated into new programs and initiatives since he returned to his hometown of Nairobi in December.

"At the Kenyatta National Hospital, our focus so far has been inpatients," Dr Mwitii said.

"The patients we see include those with post-surgical pain, burn pain, pain in critically ill patients, cancer-related pain, post-traumatic pain and patients with neuropathic pain syndromes.

"At the Mater Hospital, in addition to in-patient services we have recently started an outpatient pain service, which is very beneficial."

However, the overall pain training and management in Kenya is still in its infancy, as it is in many developing countries.

"There is widespread recognition now that pain has previously not received the attention it deserves in our country," Dr Mwitii said.

"A number of clinicians – especially specialists in other fields – are beginning to recognise their limitations in adequate pain treatment and are constantly referring patients to me so I can help out.

"I have made diagnoses like complex regional pain syndrome and chronic widespread pain, which clinicians here, because of the limited pain-training resources, hardly think about."

Part of the requirements for the successful candidate of the ANZCA scholarship is willingness to help with the development and delivery anaesthetic and pain services on their return home.

In the case of Dr Mwitii, this has been a resounding success.

Ebru Yaman
Media Manager, ANZCA

Above from left: Dr Timothy Mwitii, Jane Royle, Natalie Goodman, Brigitte Tampin, Denise Fairclough and Associate Professor Roger Goucke.