

Montefiore Physicians Offers Pediatric Life Support Training in Bangladesh

In December 2012, Dr. Waseem Hafeez from the Division of Pediatric Emergency Medicine in CHAM and Director of the Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) Program at Montefiore and Dr. Maksud Chowdhury, President of Bangladesh Medical Association of North America (BMANA) returned from a very successful voluntary mission in Bangladesh where they were able to train a significant number of physicians in PALS techniques. Bangladesh is a relatively small heavily populated country east of India with a high childhood mortality rate but lacking advanced medical care. The participants were familiar with the textbook knowledge of Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), however this is the first time these physicians had received this form of training with manikins and life saving equipment. Procedures practiced during the course included chest compression, foreign body airway maneuvers, bag-valve ventilation, endotracheal intubation, intraosseous needle insertion, automatic external defibrillator (AED) and manual defibrillator use, and also participated in pediatric code scenarios. PALS skills training was provided to 128 physicians from December 16-30, 2012.

"Over the past couple of weeks, BMANA members have been in and out of Bangladeshi hospitals and medical schools offering hands-on training, helping to set up Emergency Room equipment, and donating Automated External Defibrillators or AEDs. They have shared their expertise in providing care for those suffering from cancer, cardiac problems, pediatric concerns, and so much more."

United States Ambassador to Bangladesh, Dan Mozena



Even though these were long tiring days for both the instructors as well as the participants, all felt that it was a worthwhile effort given the enthusiasm and support received from all the medical centers visited. Some of the comments by the participants: "excellent training program very useful to us", "Strengths: well organized, precise, lot of information; Weakness: duration is short". Given the level of interest shown by the participants and their overwhelming positive feedback, continuing such endeavor in the future can promote the AHA agenda of disseminating current pediatric advanced life support knowledge to developing countries as well as transferring valuable information and skills that would otherwise not be available to the vast number of physician in Bangladesh. The hope is to widen the project to

include more Instructors to teach a larger number of providers, both physicians and nurses, and to obtain funding to continue such training and donate training equipment to the organizations so that they continue practicing these skills, which deteriorate over time.

Dr. Hafeez also participated as an invited speaker to promote the concept of pediatric emergency services in Bangladesh and discuss Pediatric Emergency Care in a CME Conference accredited by Wayne State University.

This was a successful collaboration between American Heart Association (AHA) International, BMANA, Montefiore AHA Training Center, and the medical colleagues in Bangladesh in making this project such a worthwhile experience. Lisa Kosits, Director of Clinical Education and Helen Slaven, Chief Learning Officer from the Learning Network provided PALS manuals, issued PALS provider cards, loaned manikins and other training equipment, while BMANA donated the manual defibrillators and automatic external defibrillator (AED) to the hospitals.

For more information about this program, please contact Catherine Dries, Clinical Manager, Cardiac Life Support Programs, at cdries@montefiore.org or 718-920-5737.

