

Lutherans in Medical Missions 2010 Needs and Resources Forum
March 19-20, 2010
Care of the Aged and the Chronically Ill: A Medical Mission Approach
Forum Notes

Friday, March 19, 2010

Plenary Session – Dr. Robert Weise, Professor of Practical Theology, Concordia Seminary St. Louis

Growing Older: God's Gift of Care and Hope (an ethic for aging and serving the chronically ill)

- Life is a process, it is a unit. Our development is a “continuum”.
- God's Gift: Eternal Care, Eternal Hope in Christ, Eternal Life
- Illness to Wellness in Christ begins with forgiveness of sins. A person who is desperate, chronically ill, or suffering from the loneliness of aging and ageism can have HOPE that doesn't disappoint.
- Sharing HOPE and giving CARE centers on the Love of God in Christ: sharing a cup of cold water, a word of hope and care, a hug of grace, and the ministry of being God's created people in all situations.
- As the body of Christ we all suffer and we all share the HOPE in Christ and give His CARE to others.

Saturday, March 20, 2010

Plenary Session – Dr. Roger Weise, Geriatrician, Elk Gove Village, IL

Dr. Weise compared Saul and David, both chosen by God and both described as handsome and of imposing stature. Saul however did not age well, became jealous and bitter, and died at his own hand. David made mistakes, but accepted forgiveness and died peacefully in old age. Aging means loss of many things –loved ones, memory, mobility, senses, status and position. Loneliness can ensue often causing selfishness. These losses need to be grieved, but we must adapt and accept limitations and go forward with our life. In order to age well one must continue to have a sense of fun and a sense of a future. Some kind of work to do is also essential. Caring acts are good work to do and can lead to fulfillment even when old or weak.

HIV Health Education in Papua New Guinea - Judy Schache, RN, former medical missionary

HIV/AIDS in PNG

- First National case: Port Moresby in 1987
- First Enga case: Mambisanda in 1992
- First Enga death: Mambisanda in 2000
- Enga infected: About 5% positive of tested
- Further tested: Measurable increase

My Brother's Story is about the first person that died of AIDS in Mambisanda and is used for AIDS Education. Many people in PNG have a fear of death/end of life and don't want to be tested for AIDS.

Future HIV/AIDS Program Needs

- Construction of a Care House for Patients
- Printing HIV /AIDS Education Materials
- Expanding Mobile Clinic Operations
- Providing Spiritual Counseling to at-risk youth
- Establishing a Community Resource Center
- Providing Home-Based Care for HIV/AIDS Patients
- Assistance with Testing and Counseling

Update on Community Health Education in Georgia – Rita Nickel, RN, former medical missionary

Rita described the CHE course that were conducted in the country of Georgia based on her previous experience with CHE in Kyrgyzstan.

Training included:

- Family Planning
- Reproduction
- Pregnancy
- Breast feeding
- Hygiene

International Parish Nursing and Refugee Care Project – Carol Broemmer, RN

Parish Nurse Model

- Integrate Faith and Health
- Health Education
- Health Counselor
- Health Advocate
- Liaison with the Community
- Volunteer Coordinator

Programs in Bethlehem

- Ajyal Elder Care Program coordinated by Raeda Mansour, Parish Nurse, who serves 500 people, some of them Muslim.

Finland

- Church is part of the government
- Diaconal nursing is an option for beginning nursing students
- Nurse education includes the traditional nursing courses and theology woven together

Christian Friends of New Americans is an outreach ministry to a group of immigrant refugees that live in the South St. Louis area.

Services of CFNA

- Worship and Bible Study
- ESL Classes
- Computer classes

- After school tutoring
- Citizenship classes
- Sponsorship of sporting events

“The Nurse is in” program

- Health Screening—BPs, Vision, Doctor’s assessment, heights and weights
- Health education
- Health advocacy
- Follow-up medical appointments
- Ensure interpreter
- Connections to community resources

Panel: How Should the Church Respond? A Review of Disaster Relief Haiti and Beyond
Rev. Dr. Alan Abel, M.D. Philippines, Dr. John Lautenschlager, M.D., Nigeria/Haiti, Dr. HelenMari Merritt, Haiti

Rev. Dr. Alan Abel, M.D., Philippines

Dr. Abel went with the Society of Philippine American Surgeons for “Operation Giving Back” - a two-week surgical mission to the Philippines where Dr. Abel had spent 4 years as a missionary in the 70s. There were 551 procedures completed, but there was not a sufficient support system. Conditions were not always adequate. Dr. Abel questioned the right assumed by American doctors that they can practice medicine in a foreign country without licensing.

HelenMari Merritt, M.D., Haiti

Dr. Merritt worked for five days in an orphanage turned into a hospital in Dominican Republic on the Haiti border. Surgery was difficult without a sufficient support system. There was much chaos in the situation, especially when all the “wards” were moved to the outside when there were strong aftershocks from the earthquake. In the time of crisis, there needs to be innovation, compassion, and teamwork.

Dr. John Lautenschlager, M.D., Haiti

Myths and Realities of Disasters

- You cannot get a disease from a dead person
- It will take a very long time to get back to normal

Delayed Effect

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in a small proportion of the affected population will persist.

Delayed Need

- Primary Care Physicians for general clinical work, and psychiatric treatment and support programs

Affect

- Long recuperation from severe injuries, amputations and other permanent disabilities

Need

- Follow up surgical procedures
- Physical Therapy for amputees and other mobility issues
- Fitting of prosthetics
- Vocational rehabilitation

Effect

- Infant malnutrition

Need

- Monitoring to detect cases of severe malnutrition
- Monitor for outbreaks of measles, diarrhea, malaria, respiratory infections, TB
- Immunizations
- Promote breast feeding
- Monitor growth
- Develop appropriate locally-available weaning foods and educate regarding their use
- Avoid general distribution of baby bottles, infant formula, and other inappropriate donated items.

Devotions

Chaplain Ted Wuerffel led evening and morning devotions. *Even to Your Old Age*, a song written by Chaplain Wuerffel, highlighted meaningful prayer time by the participants. Abby Wuerffel was the pianist.

Recognition Banquet

Bobbie thanked our Partners for the Forum – Concordia Seminary St. Louis, LCMS World Mission, and Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis.

Kama Bernabo welcomed the group for LCMS World Mission, sponsor of the banquet.

Bobbie recognized the mission work of Tim and Rita Nickel and introduced Rita as a newly appointed L IMM Board member replacing Dr. Velma Rynearson. Nathan Hannemann, currently a first-year medical student, spoke of seeing the Nickel's work first hand when he was on a volunteer visit to Kyrgyzstan, sponsored by L IMM. Kama Bernabo spoke of the Nickels as pioneers missionaries in both the field established in Kyrgyzstan, and later in Eurasia. Rita and Tim stated that they served through God's Grace.

Ken Greinke introduced Dr. Al and Carol Buckman. The Buckmans supported medical mission work in Nigeria when they were with LCMS World Mission. Later Dr. Buckman continued that support as African Area Secretary and later as International Secretary for World Mission. In retirement they became very involved in Christian Friends of New Americans—a non-profit organization to serve immigrant and refugees in St. Louis. In 2009, 1000 people were ministered to and 5000 volunteer hours were committed by volunteers, including the Buckmans. Thank God for the gifts of ministry God has given to the Buckmans as they have spent 45 years in ministry to spread the Gospel to “unreached people” both overseas and at home.

Rev. Larry Rockemann, Lutheran Life Communities, Banquet Speaker

Rev. Rockemann theme was *Honor your Father and Mother*. Children honor their parents when they treat them well. “We need them no matter what condition they are in.” The heroic sounding theme song of the aged or infirmed, “I don’t want to be a burden to anyone” is actually heresy. It is not biblical. If we do not honor our fathers and mothers, we will invite swift and quick ruin. “Life is a continuum from newborn helplessness, to independence, to interdependence, to dependence.”