

**4<sup>th</sup> Research Forum**  
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# **The Gap between Research in Developing and Developed Countries in Asia**

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The place of research in  
Palliative Care was  
emphasized right from  
the early work of

**Dame Cicely Saunders**

**1918-2005**

Founder of the  
International Hospice  
Movement



Qualified St. Thomas' Hospital 1957  
Immediately after house-jobs she  
took up a Research scholarship from  
St Mary's Hospital London for  
Pain in the Terminally Ill



She spent three days per week at St. Joseph's Hospice  
She studied the use of regular, individualized doses of  
oral morphine on pain in terminally ill cancer patients, and  
published her findings in *Drugs and Therapeutics Bulletin*  
in 1964

Yet research remains difficult to  
establish  
not only in developing countries in  
Asia  
but in the more developed countries  
also

Some of the problems are generic:

Lack of resources

Lack of “protected” time for research

Lack of skills in research

Low priority for research

There are specific problems:

A frail population  
Worries about consent  
intrusion  
privacy

High attrition rate  
Handling of missing values

Both the subjects & the subject matter  
requires new research methodology

Qualitative research

Quality of life research

Use of proxies

Measuring effectiveness of communication

Measuring Dignity

Measuring Suffering

Randomized controlled trials

# The Asia Pacific Region

Great diversity of  
population, race,  
language, wealth

There are now >600  
palliative care  
services in the  
region

Great variation in  
the level of service  
provided







Countries where  
Palliative Care services  
are very advanced:

Australia  
New Zealand

Countries where  
Palliative Care services  
are fairly developed:

Japan  
Korea  
Taiwan  
Hong Kong  
Singapore



Countries where  
Palliative Care services  
have started:

Malaysia  
Philippines  
Indonesia  
Thailand  
Vietnam  
Myanmar

Countries where  
Palliative Care services  
have hardly started:

Nepal  
Bangladesh  
Sri Lanka  
Laos  
Cambodia

# Common themes for early research in developing countries

Description of services

Survey of prevalence of disease/symptoms

Audit of pain control

Interventions

Use of Drugs

Truth-telling

# JAPAN

>130 palliative care units  
& 2,700 beds, but few  
free-standing in-patient  
hospices or home care  
services



Peace House Hospice  
Kanagawa  
with a View of  
Mount Fuji

# Glimpse of Research publications in Japan

Analysis of 281 related articles in Pub Med  
on  
Terminal Cancer  
Home care  
Bereavement

Shiragawa K.

A discussion of opinion survey among bereaved families of  
patients with terminal cancer under home care.

*Gan To Kagaku Ryoho.* 2002 Dec; 29 Suppl 3:493-5

## Analysis of 281 related articles

120 articles with Japanese authors (42.7%)

8 articles from Asia Pacific region (2.8%)

Taiwan - 3

Hong Kong - 3

Korea - 1

China - 1

281 related articles

Analysis of 120 articles with Japanese authors

Only 8 were published in English (6.7%)

112 were published in Japanese

99 were published in 1 journal (82.5%)

Gan To Kagaku Ryoho

13 were published in 9 other journals (10.8%)

281 related articles

Analysis of 120 articles by Japanese authors

The 99 published in *Gan To Kagaku Ryoha*  
dated from 1994 to 2005

43 of these were in 2002 & 2003

Of the 13 published in the other 9 Japanese  
journals 5 date from 1975 to 1983

Of the 8 published in English  
all 7 published in non-Japanese journals  
date from 2002 to 2005



281 related articles  
120 articles by Japanese authors

Analysis of 108 articles whose source were  
stated

48 were from hospital departments (44%)  
26 were from palliative care services (24%)  
22 were from universities (20.3%)  
19 were from nursing departments (17.6%)

Yet the 1<sup>st</sup> surprise was that  
*Gan To Kagaku Ryoho = Cancer & Chemotherapy*

There are ~ 7 journals in which palliative care  
workers publish their work

The top journal is  
*Kanwa Kea = Palliative Care*

All are in Japanese  
None are indexed journals

Yet a handful of Japanese researchers are  
getting their work published in international  
journals

J Pain Symptom Manage,  
Palliat Med, Support Care Cancer  
J Clin Oncol  
Particularly since 2002

In Korea

Workers prefer to publish in English in oncology/haematology journals because of their higher impact factor

There is 1 non-indexed palliative care journal, which is in Korean, though some abstracts are in English

In Korea

It is estimated that only 10% of research done is published in English-language journals

Other publications include the literature on Pain, & Nursing journals

In Taiwan  
Research tends to be done mainly at  
university depts

There is one non-indexed Palliative  
Care Journal published in Chinese,  
but with abstracts in English

Generally research is not a priority in  
Palliative Care Units

Hong Kong and Singapore  
These are English-speaking places

Most publications are in the local  
general medical journals  
in English

A few make it into the international  
palliative care journals

Research may not be published  
Or published in Abstract form only  
Or presented only as Posters  
Or be published in non-indexed journals  
Or be published in the local language



Often a journal is started after the formation of professional organizations in Palliative Care

Many of these countries are not English-speaking  
The journal will then be in the local language

Most of these journals would not be indexed for a long time

# National Cancer Hospital Hanoi Vietnam



# Hospice Home Care in Myanmar



## Conclusions

There are many barriers to setting up research in developing countries in Asia

Time

Money

Expertise

Priority

Research culture