

St Christopher's wins world's largest humanitarian prize

The \$1 million Conrad N Hilton Humanitarian Prize for 2001 has been awarded to St Christopher's Hospice in the UK. Established by the Conrad N Hilton Foundation in 1996, the award honours a charitable or non-governmental organisation that has made extraordinary contributions towards alleviating human suffering anywhere in the world.

St Christopher's was founded in 1967 by Dame Cicely Saunders as the world's first teaching hospice, to promote ways of lessening the pain of the dying and providing moral and spiritual comfort for patients and their families. It now welcomes approximately 40,000 visitors every year and more than 50,000 healthcare professionals from all over the world have visited and trained there.

Dame Cicely Saunders was scheduled to receive the award on behalf of St Christopher's in New York on 17 September 2001. Sadly, due to the tragic events in New York, the presentation was postponed and will be rescheduled at a later date.

Congratulations

Franco De Conno has, for many years, been hosting the EAPC Head Office free of any charge in his division and allows the staff to use all the facilities. He also regularly supports the Head Office with his advice and work. The Board of the EAPC wished to acknowledge this officially and nominated Franco De Conno 'Honorary Director of the EAPC Head Office' for his crucial contribution.

David Oliviere, EAPC Board member, has been nominated Director of

Education and Training at St Christopher's Hospice.

The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund

On 28 August 2001, in the year of its fourth anniversary, The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund launched a £5 million initiative for palliative care in the developing world over the next five years.

Despite an increase in the cases of cancer and the spread of HIV/AIDS in many of the world's poorest countries, individuals afflicted with terminal illnesses continue to endure unnecessary suffering because of the failure of many governments to find a place for palliative care within their health policies.

The Princess of Wales was committed to raising awareness about many conditions, and the Fund aims to continue her work through this new initiative. By using its influence to challenge the attitudes of officials in developing countries, the Fund intends to draw attention to the entitlement of the patient to palliative care.

A series of grants provided by the Fund, and directed initially at Eastern and Southern Africa, will deliver both the education and the resources necessary to support those in pain.

The Fund has already given grants to 12 hospices, mainly in Uganda and South Africa. Three additional grants have been announced for Malawi and Zambia, and further grants are being considered to encourage cross-programme networking and training in Kenya, Malawi and Zambia.

For more information about this initiative please contact: The Press Office, The Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, County Hall,

Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7PB, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7902 5500.
Fax: +44 (0)20 7902 5511.
email: info@memfund.org.uk
website: www.theworkcontinues.org

Palliative medicine school

The School of Training and Updating in Palliative Medicine (SFAMP) was founded in Milan in April 1999. With a distinguished Board of Directors, the school's collaborators are heads of the most important national oncological institutes in Italy and hospices, and the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care (IAHPC) is its patron.

The aim of the School is to spread the practice of palliative medicine throughout Italy. The target audience is GPs, other specialist physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, physiotherapists, volunteers and other healthcare professionals.

Courses are currently free of charge. A feature particular to the School is that those who enrol on the courses are offered the opportunity to gain practical experience by working in palliative care units in various institutes and hospices collaborating with the Italian National Cancer Institute.

Five projects are currently being finalised, which include collaboration with the Milan health authority to ensure that a training course for GPs is included in its obligatory education programme; collaboration with the training departments of the National Cancer Institute to train nurses in palliative care with a 400-hour course; the organisation of open lectures for the public to inform them of existing healthcare services in Italy for terminal cancer patients; the establishment of video conferences with simultaneous connection to the various centres

throughout Italy to share the School's activities and an e-learning programme in collaboration with Alberta University, Canada.

For further information, please email: sfamp@istitutotumori.mi.it or contact Franco De Conno or Carla Ripamonti, Rehabilitation and Palliative Care Operative Unit, National Cancer Institute, Milan, Italy.

Integrated care

As part of its fifth Framework Programme 1998–2002, 'Quality of Life and Living Resources', the European Commission Research Directorate General has undertaken a project introduced by the Continuing and Palliative Care Unit at Brugmann University Hospital, Brussels, entitled 'How can continuing care be integrated into the hospital environment?' The project began in October 2000 and lasts for three years. It brings together 13 European partners, including Austria, Belgium, France, Switzerland and the UK, and aims to:

- Identify the values and principles of continuing care
- Review the philosophy of palliative medicine and adapt it to the reality of the hospital environment
- Identify the problems involved in the integration of continuing care
- Look for new strategies for integration and improve the way in which mobile (hospital) teams work.

The plans of the project are for: clinicians to produce a report of the current situation within their mobile teams; a group of researchers in philosophy, ethics, sociology and palliative medicine to work with the clinicians to establish a methodology and analyse this report; a group of consultants in education and communication to draw up a training

programme for mobile teams in the light of this analysis.

The anticipated results are:

- A training programme for members of mobile teams
- European recommendations for educational and operational strategies for mobile teams
- The setting up of an interdisciplinary research network on the integration of continuing care.

For further information please contact Dr Catherine Markstein, Scientific Co-ordinator, Ave Lambeau 24, 1200 Brussels, Belgium. email: catherine.markstein@skynet.be

Palliative care for children in the Netherlands

In the context of a wide-ranging, research-stimulating programme for palliative care in the Netherlands, a brief survey has been conducted to provide information on the needs and availability of palliative care services for children in the Netherlands.

The study focuses on:

- The palliative care services available for children
- The views of parents of children with life-threatening illnesses regarding the palliative care they needed and received
- The adequacy of the available palliative care services for children in meeting the needs and problems of children with life-threatening illnesses and those of their parents.

To provide a comprehensive overview of the actual situation in the Netherlands, questionnaires were sent to carers working in different fields, and in-depth interviews were conducted with bereaved parents. In addition, interviews with professional carers and representatives of parental organisations were held.

The final results of this project are expected at the end of November 2001. Consequently, recommendations to improve the provision of palliative care for children will be made, while the results of the study will undoubtedly inspire additional research in this field. For further information, please contact Conny Molenkamp, Maastricht University, Centre for Nursing Research, PO 616, 6200 Maastricht, the Netherlands. email: c.molenkamp@zw.unimaas.nl

Resource centre

The François-Xavier Bagnoud Documentation and Information Centre is a resource centre for information on palliative care, support for terminally ill patients, death and bereavement. It was set up in partnership with the Demeter group, which consists of the Société française d'accompagnement et de soins palliatifs (SFAP), the Société de Thanatologie, Jusqu'à la mort accompagner la vie (JALMALV), and the Association François-Xavier Bagnoud, and is supported by the Fondation de France. The Research and Information Centre contains a library of multimedia material for those with an interest in health and social issues.

The services available include literature searches by subject, a personal guide to the collection, selective distribution of information, photocopying, and an email service (afxb.cdi@online.fr).

It also publishes a quarterly research bulletin on the internet (www.fxb.org/palliative/CDI).

For more information please contact: François-Xavier Bagnoud, Centre d'information et de documentation, 7, rue Violet, 75015 Paris, France. Tel: +33 1 44 37 92 03.