

EAPC news and views



www.eapcnet.org

Palliatif

Palliatif is the contact letter for all the French-speaking associations involved in palliative care in France, Belgium, Quebec and Switzerland. These associations regularly contribute, on an unpaid basis, to the magazine's content and assure the distribution of its issues in their respective countries and in the various conferences that are held there.

Palliatif aims to exchange information and ideas. Its objective is also to be distributed in less fortunate countries, where professionals are in desperate need of information but have limited resources. It hopes to start or support possible sponsorship or partnership projects with these countries.

Palliatif is distributed free of charge thanks to the support of a sponsor that finances printing and distribution costs. It is an independent publication since it is not published by an institution. The first issue was published in 1995; it is now published regularly (three or four times a year).

For more information: Isabelle Richoz, Editorial co-ordinator, 102, Ch. de La Montagne, CH 1224 Chêne-Bougeries, Switzerland. Tel/Fax: +41 2 2348 8587. email : irzpalli@vtx.ch

Information Service

As the frontiers of hospice and palliative care increase – both geographically and in scope of activity – so the need for information provision grows too.

This information service, *hospice information (HI)*, endeavours to provide a high-quality service for members of the public and anyone connected with, or interested in, hospice and palliative care. Providing

the right information at the right time, in an appropriate format, with competence and compassion, enabling people to share information and experience and thus become more easily a part of the worldwide hospice community, is a key aim of the HI team. They write, '*hospice information* plays a key role as an information provider. Established originally at St Christopher's Hospice in 1977, *hospice information* is now a thriving joint venture between St Christopher's and the national charity, Help the Hospices. This 'joined up' working enables us to maximise synergy and pool resources: the clinical experience of a leading hospice/palliative care centre with education, research and a specialist palliative care library and the wide reach of a national hospice charity. It is a crucial step forward to ensure a more cohesive and effective response to the needs of individuals and organisations in their task of developing and supporting palliative care abroad.

Around 70% of our enquiries come from healthcare professionals, and about 25% from overseas. We are often the first point of contact for embryonic services – from Argentina to Zambia – and for patients and carers anxious to find out more about hospice and palliative care.

Since our amalgamation in 2002 we now operate from two sites: from Help the Hospices in central London and from St Christopher's Hospice in south-east London. The International Information Officer, Avril Jackson, works closely with David Oliviere, Director of Education and Training at St Christopher's, on the international visitors' programme that has an increasing bias towards the needs of colleagues from overseas and now

includes two annual conferences in French and Spanish and the monthly First Friday visit. For all visitors to St Christopher's, but especially those from overseas, there is the 'added value' of the chance to link up with *hospice information*, enabling excellent networking opportunities with other palliative care workers around the world.

The international section of *hospice information* is also an integral part of the 'UK forum for hospice and palliative care worldwide', established as part of Help the Hospices, to represent a wide cross-section of individuals and organisations that are committed to promoting and supporting palliative care overseas. Two new initiatives on the international side are the creation of an International Skills Database, which will enable us to respond more efficiently to enquiries about UK clinical placements and overseas teaching and training needs, and an international electronic newsletter. *worldwide hospice and palliative care online*, is a signposting tool that aims to keep people involved in international projects informed about funding opportunities, twinning, publications, disease information, and policy and practice.

The team in the London office now handle most of the national enquiries and such publications as the UK Directory of Hospice and Palliative Care and a range of fact sheets that is steadily growing in diversity and number. Our latest fact sheet, *Providing information about funerals: issues and ideas for hospices*, by Rose Heatley, offers information, ideas and resources to help those organisations thinking of introducing a funeral information service or wishing to

reflect on their current practice. The range is also complemented by several reports from Help the Hospices reflecting current practice in the UK, including: *Aromatherapy for all: empowering the clinical team*, by Gwyn Featonby which outlines a nurse-led initiative by a dually qualified aromatherapist. This service empowered the nursing team to provide aromatherapy and massage under supervision thus enabling patients to benefit from an extended service and bringing enhanced levels of work satisfaction for staff. Additionally there are two free electronic newsletters. The latest, *hospice care update* considers a variety of issues from the perspective of professionals across the hospice and palliative care sector. It aims to share professional experience, looks at current issues and highlights recent projects, unpublished work and research that professionals would like to share with other hospices. *hospice UK online* is a weekly news bulletin, free to all, providing updates on the latest events in palliative care in the UK. *hospice UK online* is supported by the Community Fund.

A membership service provides the above publications, the *hospice information bulletin* (a quarterly magazine), access to the members' area of our website and free fact sheets. It enables members to strengthen professional links within the worldwide hospice/palliative care community. Membership is free to people in resource-poor settings.

The *hospice information* team would love to hear from other information providers with a view to establishing possible joint projects. There is a wealth of information available around the world and possibly some materials that could be adapted for other settings and

translated into other languages. Let's not reinvent the wheel – palliative care is sharing!'

Please contact us for further information or to arrange a visit if you're planning to visit the UK.
Tel: + 44 (0)20 870 903 3 903.
email: info@hospiceinformation.info
website: www.hospiceinformation.info

Palliative Medicine Unit opens in Western Norway

Norway has opened its second palliative medicine unit in Bergen. A full range of palliative care services is now provided in Norway's second largest city.

Western Norway Health Care Region covers a population of 0.9 million, and is the second largest healthcare region in the country. The region has approximately 2,100 cancer deaths per year. The main city is Bergen, with a population of 230,000.

Sunniva Hospice was established in Bergen in 1993 at Haralds plass Diaconal Hospital. This department has up to now comprised an outpatient clinic, day care centre, home care and bereavement services. Thanks to a special grant from the Norwegian government, an inpatient unit was opened on 20 January 2003. The unit is established as an acute palliative care unit with five beds. The staff will engage in research, teaching and advisory work aimed at healthcare professionals in hospitals and the community throughout the region. The unit will be run in close co-operation with the Regional Centre of Excellence for Palliative Care, Western Norway, and the Pain Clinic at Haukeland University Hospital.

Up to now, the Palliative Medicine Unit at St Olav's Hospital in Trondheim has been the only academic palliative medicine unit in the country, and Stein

Kaasa the only professor of palliative medicine. It is, therefore, a national occasion that Jan Henrik Rosland, Head of Department at Sunniva Hospice, has been appointed Professor of Palliative Medicine at the University of Bergen. It is hoped that Norway's three remaining medical schools will also have a chair in this field of medicine before long.

Bergen also has a functioning Hospice Unit at the Red Cross Nursing Home, which will be extended from eight to 14 beds this year. With the new palliative medicine unit, a full range of palliative care services is available to the city's population.

Dagny Faksvåg Haugen, Regional Centre of Excellence for Palliative Care, Western Norway and Norwegian Association for Palliative Medicine

IAPC Irl news

New literature

The Irish Association for Palliative Care (IAPC Irl) has developed a series of booklets on euthanasia and hydration at the end of life. It has also produced a booklet aimed at terminally ill patients wishing to return home to the Republic of Ireland detailing how to go about making arrangements for this. Although some of the information relates specifically to Irish law, it is also based on EU strategy.

National Development Committee for Palliative Care

The IAPC's National Development Committee for Palliative Care chaired by Dr Tony O'Brien is planned for February. It will meet four times a year and be responsible for the national implementation of palliative care policies and practices. Following the publication of its national strategy report in 2001, the committee's establishment is eagerly awaited.