



Reaching Out to them
... Together
E-newsletter

PALLIUM INDIA
CARE BEYOND CURE

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Dear friends

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This special issue of our newsletter comes to you to inform you about the Bruce Davis Gold Medal. If you know any one in any Indian Medical College who may be able to convey this to their medical students and young doctors, I hope you will pass this on to them.

Following the announcement about the course from the Institute of Palliative Medicine in Calicut, you will also find a little bit of information about Mr Bruce Davis, a remarkable man who seldom comes to limelight.

Bruce Davis Gold Medal in Palliative Medicine 2008

Institute of Palliative Medicine, Medical College, Calicut, Kerala - 673 008,

Tel: 0495 2354166; Fax: 0495 2354897, E-mail: pain@vsnl.com

Dear Sir / Madam,

The Bruce Davis Gold Medal in Palliative Medicine for young doctors in India is entering in to 5th year, thanks to the enthusiastic support from young doctors, teachers, administrators and Palliative Care services in different parts of the country. Doctors who appear(ed) for their **final MBBS examination between 31 December 2005 and 31 December 2008** from any Medical College in India can apply for the examination conducted by the Institute of Palliative Medicine, Calicut, India. There will be two levels of examinations: an open screening test at national level at the

candidate's place and a final examination in Calicut. There is no registration fee for this examination.

The screening test comprises of one hundred multiple choice questions. The application form and questionnaire for the screening test are enclosed. These can also be collected from the nearby palliative care centres or Principals of many of the medical colleges. Candidates can work on the questionnaire on their own. A list of possible resources including books and web sites are enclosed. Guidance may also be available from the near by palliative care units / specialists. The completed questionnaires along with the application forms should reach the Institute of Palliative Medicine, Pain and Palliative Care Society, WHO Demonstration Project, Medical College, Calicut- 673008, Kerala, India **before 20 November 2008**.

Ten top scorers in the screening test will qualify for the final examination to be held at the Institute of Palliative Medicine, Calicut. The selected candidates are entitled to III a/c return fare to Calicut by train and will be provided accommodation at the institute during the final examination.

The final examination will consist of two parts: Theory & Assessment of clinical skills. The final examinations will be in the second week of January 2009.

The winner of the final examination will be awarded the Bruce Davis Gold Medal in Palliative Medicine, a citation and cash award of Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees twenty five thousand).

Dr. E. Divakaran

Chairman, Board of Examiners

And now, please meet Mr Bruce Davis.



There are some people who do not desire limelight, and quite happily stay in the background and offer their services. He is one of them. It took considerable

persuasion to make him share some of his personal experiences with us. Here is what he says.

"I first took an interest in cancer matters following the death of a friend from the disease in the 1950's. Subsequently, in 1966 and 1974 my mother and father also died of cancer. In those days, no special training was given relating to pain relief or palliative care and I found this position quite scandalous in a prosperous country.

In 1967, I set up a Charitable Trust in order to do what I could to promote awareness of the problem in the UK and to provide specialist care for cancer patients. This was and still is a small family Trust, not seeking money from the public but working with other larger charities on occasion.

From small beginnings, through contact with and financial help to National Organisations such as Marie Curie and Cancer Relief (now Macmillan), the Trust grew until it was able to provide in 1979, in conjunction with Cancer Relief, the first dedicated nursing service in Cornwall consisting of 2 trained nurses. Over the course of time, the service has spread nationally into a most effective force for the relief of pain, both physical and mental, for cancer patients and others suffering from terminal illnesses.

Following the great improvement of cancer care in the UK, the Trustees felt that they should use the expertise that had been gathered in the home environment and try to spread this experience among those overseas who were less fortunately placed.

In the 1990's the Trust carried out initial work, in concert with the Hong Kong Government, in the development of a dedicated nursing service there; nurses were trained alongside our team in Cornwall and at UK Hospices and this co-operative work

resulted eventually in the setting up of a Macmillan type home care service. The Trust Nurse Consultant, Val Hunkin, also did considerable work in Nairobi.

In the late 1990's, she was on a visit to India giving workshops with Dr Robert Twycross at Calicut, amongst other venues. On her return to the UK she reported that she had met a most remarkable team in Calicut at the Pain and Palliative Care Society there and we decided to back their endeavours with finance and any other help we could. There followed a meeting between myself and Dr Rajagopal in Mumbai at which I pledged enough financial backing to build a facility consisting of a Hospice and Training Unit, two nurses houses and a building for residential visitors; this is now called the Institute of Palliative Medicine. Much additional support has been given to most of the other projects radiating from the PPCS in Calicut organised through their innovative concept of Neighbourhood Network in Palliative Care. Over the years, I have developed an enormous admiration for the work done there and the interest and caring attitude shown by literally thousands of volunteers who are associated with this work. I have also built up a close relationship with the team of doctors there, particularly Dr Suresh Kumar and Dr Anil Paleri with whom I have spent much time discussing plans for future expansion both by visits and constant e-mails. Dr Rajagopal has moved to Trivandrum, where the Charity Pallium India which he set up, is now based and I work very closely with him in developing his work through his Trust in South Kerala and the wider world. He has been my good friend and mentor ever since we met.

The above is a very brief account of how I became involved with the Indian scene, which also includes the Hospice in Vellore and the PPCS in Guwahati, Assam.

Throughout all the time I have been involved with the little input my Trust could give to the enormous problem confronting cancer sufferers in India, I have been inspired

by all whom I have met concerned with the task and I have been honoured and my life greatly enriched by working with them. I will continue to do what I can as long as I am physically able.”

Best wishes,

Editorial board.

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