

Malawi PTC course Report

April 2005

Introduction

On Wednesday 30 and Thursday 31 of March the Department of Anaesthesiology, in close cooperation with the International PTC Foundation in Oxford, England, organized a two-day PTC-course for the 4th year medical students of the College of Medicine in Blantyre, Malawi.

The aim of the Primary Trauma Care course is to provide doctors and health workers in less affluent countries with a structured approach to assess and treat trauma patients in the first hours after an accident, adjusted to the often limited facilities and resources in those countries.

The College of Medicine of Malawi was founded in 1991 with strong financial and manpower support from the Dutch Government. Every year the 4th year students attend a 3-week introduction course in the Department of Anaesthesia in the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital.

The head of this department, dr. Bruce McCormick has asked dr. Henk Haisma, who has through the years been heavily involved in the introduction of the PTC-course in several parts of the world and was previous Head of the Department of Anaesthesia in Blantyre, to organise this PTC course again for the students.

This was the sixth Malawian PTC course, the first having been held in Blantyre in 2001. Since then 4 local instructors have been trained. Two of them, Mr. John Gawanika and Mr. Richard Kachere, both Anaesthetic Clinical Officers, participated in this student course.

Country Profile

Malawi is often referred to as the “warm heart” of Africa. It has a population of more than 10 million, mostly relying on substance farming. It ranks as the fourth poorest country in the world, with very little money to spend on health or education.

Sad enough this country also ranks very high on mortality caused by trauma. Road traffic accidents are notorious, the cause being ill maintained vehicles, lots of drivers driving without permit and reckless driving. Other causes of trauma are violence (machete cuts and beatings), burns, falls from trees and crocodile bites.

There are two large general hospitals and a network of district hospitals. Many of the district hospitals, the place where most first trauma resuscitation takes place, don't have a doctor. Often there is a shortage of supplies of any kind, even in the major hospitals. Transport of patients is often badly organized and takes a long time, while good communication is lacking.

Over all there is a strong need to improve medical resources related to emergency care.

Local arrangements

Dr. Henk Haisma was accommodated in the newly renovated College of Medicine guesthouse in Mt. Pleasant just 500 metres from the residence of dr. Bruce McCormick. So no special arrangements had to be made for him for transport to the hospital.

The course was held in the Anaesthetic Department, where we could use the classroom for the lectures and three other smaller rooms for the workshops, skill-stations and scenario training. Manikins and other materials were borrowed from the Malawi School of Anaesthesia.

All lectures were given using powerpoint presentation. Manuals were provided for by the International PTC-Organization in Oxford as were the certificates.

Because English is the official language in Malawi, there was no need to translate any of the course material into one of the local idioms.

Because this course was part of the student curriculum, existing arrangements for food and lodging for the students could be made use of without extra costs.

Participants

All 24 participants were 4th year medical students with little or no clinical experience. (see list of participants)

Instructors

The local instructors were: John Gawanika, and Richard Kachere both Anaesthetic Clinical Officer and locally trained in 2003 as an PTC instructor, dr. Bruce McCormick Consultant Anaesthetist and Head of the Anaesthetic Department, dr. Felix Namboya Assistant Lecturer in the Department and Henk Haisma, Anaesthesiologist and PTC instructor.

The course

The PTC course was given in the usual fashion. (see course time table) The students did a MCQ test at the beginning, had some important lectures in the morning and then were getting skill stations, workshops or scenarios.

As seems to be usual, the students were very shy in the beginning and it was also apparent that they hadn't much clinical experience yet. The second day they became more active and bold, asked lots of questions and performed with great enthusiasm in the scenario sessions.

The results of the second MCQ showed a significant improvement (from a mean of 13.7 to 5.1 mistakes).

Funding

The PTC course formed part of a four week introduction in Anaesthesia, the students didn't have to pay a course fee and their food and lodging was taken care of by the college of medicine.

The air ticket of the overseas instructor dr. Henk Haisma was paid by the Anaesthetic Association from Great Britain and Ireland (AAGBI). Accommodation and the majority of the meals were provided by the College of Medicine.

Evaluation

The PTC course was part of a three weeks module for the 4th year medical students of the College of Medicine. The following is part of their evaluation: 1 = very poor, 5 = very good

PTC course	Average mark: 5.0
<i>Comments:</i> Nicely arranged and presented. Should definitely be there next year. Can I have another one? Lovely – funny, yet educative – couldn't ask for better. Very nice, brief and interactive – I really enjoyed this. Very useful. Very useful course taught very well and enjoyed greatly. Thank you for this – now when we bump into emergencies we'll finally act like real medics. Great and fun. Very good, interesting and practical.	

It was the only aspect of the three weeks module which scored the highest possible mark.

Conclusion

Resuming we can look back on a very successful PTC course which gave the local instructors again a chance to practice their acquired skills. Ways of extending the PTC course to private companies in Malawi need to be explored.

Dr. Bruce McCormick was a perfect host and a excellent instructor as well. The students praised his energetic and friendly style. Thank you.

On behalf of the PTC Faculty Malawi 2005

Dr. Henk Haisma

PTC Course Blantyre 2005

Wednesday 30th March

09 00 – 09 30	Opening ceremony	
09 30 – 09 50	Introduction and MCQ	Henk Haisma
09 50 – 10 10	Local trauma perspective	Felix Namboya
10 10 – 10 40	ABCDE of Trauma and Primary survey	Henk Haisma
10 40 – 11 10	Airway and Breathing	John Gawanika
11 10 – 11 30	Tea Break	
11 30 – 12 00	Circulation and Shock	Richard Kachere
12 00 – 13 00	Lunch	
13 00 – 14 00	Skill stations	John
	Airway (Basic adult)	Richard
	Airway neonates	Bruce.
	Chest drains	Felix
	Intravenous access	Henk
14 00 – 14 30	Chest injuries	John
14 30 – 15 00	Abdominal injuries	
15 00 – 15 15	Tea Break	
15 15 – 16 45	Scenarios	all
16 45 – 17 00	Overview and summary	Henk.

Thursday 31 March

09 00 – 09 10	Introduction to day two	Henk.
09 10 – 09 40	Head and Spinal injuries	Henk
09 40 – 10 10	Paediatrics and Obstetrics	Bruce
10 00 – 10 30	Burns and Limb injuries	Felix
10 30 – 10 45	Tea Break	
10 45 – 12 00	Workshops	Felix
	Analgesia	John
	Transportation	Bruce
	Paediatrics	Henk
	Neurological assessment	
12 00 – 13 00	Lunch	
13 00 – 13 20	Disaster management	Henk
13 20 - 13 45	Secondary Survey	Felix
13 45 – 15 15	Scenarios	all
15 15 – 15 30	Break	
15 30 – 15 45	Multiple choice paper	
15 45 - 16 00	Feedback and summary	Henk
16 00	Certificates and close	Henk

4th Year students for Year 4 Module in Anaesthesia and Critical Care Medicine

1	CHIMPHAMBANO Charles
2	CHIRAMBO Webster
3	CHIRWA Leah
4	CHIUM Sandy
5	DEMBO Kelvin
6	FLETCHER Veronica
7	GONDWE Lillian
8	JERENI Bwanali
9	KAYAMBO Doris
10	KAYANGE Michael
11	LIKAKA Andrew
12	LUDZU Enock
13	MEMBE Gladys
14	MKANDAWIRE Mercy
15	MNDOLO Samson
16	MSOLOMBA Bridget
17	MUSOPOLE Owen
18	MWAFONGO Albert
19	MZINGANJIRA Henry
20	NTHENDA Gari
21	NYIRENDA Saulos
22	NYIRENDA Werani
23	PATHIRANA Lakdini
24	PHIRI Damalawo