

REPORT ON THE FIRST PTC REFRESHER COURSE AND TWO PTC STUDENT COURSES

Refresher course on 1 April 2006

Introduction

On the first of April a PTC refresher course was held . During last year, several people asked if it was possible to have some kind of PTC refresher training because they felt their knowledge and skills in PTC had diminished for lack of practice. This request was discussed at the Latin American PTC meeting in Santiago the Chile in January 2006 and all persons attending thought it was a good idea to go ahead and organize it.

A concept program for a half day refresher course was put together and we decided to give it a try, in combination with the next series of two-day student courses.

The program was as follows:

- Introduction, followed by 4 lectures:
 - ABC of trauma care
 - Airway and Breathing
 - Circulation
 - Head Trauma
- Coffee, followed by 4 skill/scenario stations
- Airway-management
 - Cervical Spine/ log roll
 - Scenario I
 - Scenario II
 - MCQ test

Because of the experimental nature of this course the number of students was kept low (18) as was the enrolment fee. Registration was possible for doctors and nurses, but for the stations the students were divided in one nurse and three doctor groups.

The lectures were kept very short and much time was given for discussion. This gave the students the opportunity to share their experiences in trauma management and to get answers to urgent questions. Those discussions were very lively and showed that trauma management in Suriname has improved the last few years but there are still lots of shortcomings, caused not only by lack of funds and resources but also by the difficulties in motivating people to invest energy and manpower in trauma management.

Some of the participants, students and instructors thought the program was a bit too short and the course should have more effect if it contained more skill- and scenario stations. On the other hand a whole day course would be much more expensive and therefore be less attractive for some of the students.

Conclusion: for the first time in PTC-history a refresher course was held. A short, half-day program was put together . The course was attended by 18 people and seemed to fill in a clear need. In a forthcoming meeting we will evaluate the benefits of this course and the structure of possible future refresher courses.

Two-day Student courses on 8,9 and 10,11 april 2006

Introduction

A week after the refresher course two student courses were held, the first for doctors and the second for paramedics.

General Organization

All courses were held in a theatre complex near the centre of Paramaribo. This location was chosen because the Faculty of Medicine, where many previous courses were held was not available. Besides the central location, this venue also had the advantage that the secretariat of the SPAOGS, the overall organization of PTC in Suriname is residing in this complex.

Participants

For the first course the participants were all doctors, many of them young and working at the Emergency Department of the Academic Hospital, but also some very experienced general physicians, one of whom confessed to be almost 70 years old! The other group consisted mostly of nurses, many of them working in the Emergency Department or in the ICU's of the different hospitals, and one midwife. All students were very enthusiastic and contributed highly to the good atmosphere prevailing during the courses. At the end we asked them to fill in an evaluation form and it turned out that almost everybody judged very favourably on the contents of the course, the faculty members, the organization and the location.

The Courses

Both courses followed the usual PTC pattern. Instead of the Chest Drain we put in a skill station on Basic Life Support. Shortly before we started the course we were informed about a new protocol for BLS. It turned out that this new protocol caused quite some confusion as it doesn't follow the ABC sequence. We will have to discuss how to deal with this confusion. Also the BLS protocol in the PTC manual and some of the questions in the MCQ form need revision acknowledging the most recent changes.

The Faculty

Especially during weekdays it was very difficult to find enough instructors, and also during the weekend it turned out to be difficult to keep the faculty together. This may be a problem when instructors don't know what their colleagues have said in their lectures, which sometimes causes inconsistencies during discussions in the skill stations and workshops.

Fortunately some of the instructors who had not been very active in the past period showed up and turned out to be very valuable teachers.

Results

In the doctor-group the results of the pre-test gave a mean of 10 mistakes, the post-test 5.2. The best student made one mistake.

In the paramedic group the results were : pre 13.8 and post 8.2 mistakes. Here the best student made 3 mistakes in the final test.

Because we didn't tell the students beforehand that depending on the results of the final test they could either pass or fail the test, as had been discussed in Santiago, we decided that everybody would get a certificate of attendance. For the future we will have to decide how we are going to implement criteria to qualify for a real diploma.

Conclusion

Two successful two-day PTC student courses were held in Paramaribo. As we always say afterwards: it was hard work, but it was worth the effort.