PRIMARY TRAUMA CARE (PTC) IN PAKISTAN

Primary Trauma Care into Pakistan began in 2002 when the charity, IDEALS (international Disaster and Emergency Aid with Long Term Support) was made aware of the problems of resuscitation of the injured in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan on the North West border with Afghanistan.

These are places where the rule of law has never been fully exerted by central government. The situation was no different during the British occupation of the Indian sub continent when, at best, an uneasy truce existed between the border tribesmen and troops of the Raj. As this document is being written there is wide spread violence reported along the border region involving the Pakistan Army and groups who are demanding Sharia (Islamic) law and complete local autonomy. The fighting between Taliban and NATO forces just over the border in Afghanistan adds to the turmoil and reinforces the great need for the system of Primary Trauma Care to be introduced as soon as possible.

Before PTC could begin, however, it was imperative that support from local North West Pakistan Anaesthetist and Surgeons was obtained and herein lay a story of great endeavour by our Pakistan colleagues throughout the whole country coupled with tremendous, loyal support for their British friends.

It soon became obvious that the more sophisticated forms of training could not be applied to a region where there was a paucity of even the most basic equipment and transfer to hospital units could often be measured in days rather than hours.

We were greatly assisted in our access to the area by Sir Terence English, past President of the Royal College of Surgeons, who introduced us to senior surgeons in Peshawar most particularly Professor Mohammed Kabir director of Ghandara University. The seal was set on our endeavour with the local realisation that Primary Trauma Care had a vigorous and successful international programme of training in countries with limited facilities. This was ideal for the situation of the North West Frontier.

In March 2003 the first course was held at Ghandara University when thirty very senior surgeons and anaesthetists attended the course with everyone completing it. The enthusiasm was enormous and after an initial three day programme, which included a one day instructors’ course, three major hospitals took up the baton and in the same week carried out three more well -attended and popular PTC courses. The faculty from the UK which had conducted the initial course merely acted as
observers for the second round local training courses in which the instructors were entirely from Peshawar.

Two important events coincided with this first instructional foray into the North West Frontier. First representatives of the Pakistan Army were present at Ghandara University and a UK faculty member of PTC was invited to visit the Army Medical School in Rawalpindi to discuss the application of PTC to the military needs.

As a direct result of this a course was held at the Military Hospital in Pindi in May 2003. As well as three UK members the combined service course used the military and civilian members of the Peshawar course. Subsequent courses have been held and PTC has been absorbed into the military curriculum.

It is fortunate that Professor Rashid Jooma, Professor of Neuro surgery at Jinnah Medical College was in Peshawar at the time of the first course in March 2003 and became interested in applying the principles in the Sindh area of Pakistan. In November 2003 PTC was invited to undertake the first course in Karachi that was held at Dow. This course had faculty members representing the United Kingdom and from Peshawar who had trained in March 2003.
As happened in Peshawar the Sindh faculty took flight and numerous courses were conducted. In line with the ethos of PTC the UK instructors gradually withdrew and the work was completely assumed by Pakistani members of the organisation.

**Total Trained in Sindh 2004 -2007**

![Bar Chart]

The Peshawar courses and the combined service ones have demonstrated the PTC ethos of donating the training system and allowing the local staff to rapidly progress to independence. The total number of individuals trained in Pakistan is over 1000 with over 250 hundred instructors. The success of PTC was such that faculties were created in Lahore and Quetta.

![Map]

**PTC and the Earthquake of October 2005**
The existence of a PTC “fellowship” in Pakistan proved its worth at the time of the Pakistan earthquake in October 2005. The world responded with offers of aid and IDEALS was able to pursue numerous immediate humanitarian and medical programmes because of the PTC members who collaborated with each other and organised the delivery of aid in various forms. Among the great achievements was the ability to by-pass the clogged channels in Islamabad which was full of well intentioned international volunteers trying to reach the remote areas. Another signal success occurred because of PTC; IDEALS was able to sponsor two teams of plastic surgeons from the United Kingdom were able to visit and carry out numerous delayed procedures on victims of the earthquake. It is unlikely that IDEALS would have been able to complete this work if PTC not been well established in Pakistan had access to the goodwill and expertise of our friends from the PTC group.

PTC/IDEALS ACTIVITY IN EARTHQUAKE

1. DOCs FROM VARIOUS CENTRES WERE PART OF PTC/IDEALS "FELLOWSHIP" AND SUPPORTED EACH OTHER
2. TEAMS UNDER PTC BANNER WORKED TOGETHER
3. REQUEST TO AND DELIVERY OF AID FROM IDEALS WAS EASIER BECAUSE OF LOCAL PTC CONNECTIONS

In January 2007 in Lahore a Southern Asia meeting was held with delegates from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom and Pakistan. The firm objective of the meeting was to cement the work undertaken throughout the region and to pursue standards of excellence in trauma training and practice.
The full circle has now been completed with training for FATA surgeons due to begin on December 4\textsuperscript{th} 2007 in Peshawar ad hosted by Ghandara University -- the site where PTC in Pakistan began in 2004. Between thirty and forty delegates are expected and a PTC faculty will be developed to cover the area and promulgate this work.