

Suriname PTC Course report, October 2007

Introduction:

PTC started in Suriname in 2002, since then 17 student courses were held, in the first years mainly for doctors, in more recent years at least half of the courses have been organized for nurses . Two instructor courses have been organized and one refresher course. In 2003 PTC became part of SPAOGS, the Organization for Post Graduate Education in Suriname.

Courses:

Two courses were organized in October 2007 ; the first for nurses on 18 and 19 October, the second, on 20 and 21 October was supposed to be for doctors , but there were so little applications from doctors and so many from nurses and other paramedical groups, that we decided to admit people from those last groups in the second course. The lectures were for the whole group, while in the workshops and skill stations the students were divided in doctor- and nurse groups.

In the first course (24 students) we had mainly ICU and ER nurses, but also a dentist , a life guard and a rescue-team member.

In the second group (22 students) we had 10 people from the Medische Zending (medical mission), the organization responsible for the medical care in the isolated interior of Suriname, two of them doctors and eight Health workers, comparable to Clinical Officers in Southern Africa. This was the first time we had such a big group from this organization. Most others were young doctors, recently graduated from the College of medicine, two ICU nurses, a rescue-team member and a physiotherapist.

For the second time the courses were held in the spacious lobby of the old theatre, with ample room for the different workshops and skill stations.

Both courses followed the usual PTC pattern. The only change was that we inserted a workshop on X-rays, where the students were trained to interpret X rays of the cervical spine, thorax and pelvis.

Nearly all slides are now translated in Dutch, the official language in Suriname since most of the nurses and other paramedical students are not fluent in English and also it gives the opportunity to translate difficult medical terminology.

For the first time we used the most recent MCQ list- also translated in Dutch- which turned out to be less equivocal than the old one. The results of the pre-test were quite awful in both groups. One of the reasons for that is the fact that, though the course had been announced weeks before, most people registered two or three days before the courses started so they didn't have time to study the manual beforehand. To our relief the second MCQ showed an impressive improvement (nurses pretest 44% - posttest 26.6 % wrong, doctors pretest 38.1%!- posttest 13% wrong). During the group-sessions there were very interesting discussions about the working conditions in the different parts of the country. Some of the participants asked us to do special courses for their colleagues. We promised to seriously consider this option.

We asked the students to fill in an evaluation form and the course in general but especially the scenario training was highly appreciated.

Instructors:**The instructors for the courses were:**

Y.Chou-Lie , C.Fung A Foek, M.Tjon Sie Fat, L.Mahes, R.Biharisingh, all anesthesiologists., L.Akrum- Jong A Kiem, L. Liau Kie Fa ,general practitioners , I.Heereveen, ass. int medicine, E.Kafiluddin, neurologist, R.Ramtahalsingh radiologist, H.Karansingh, ass.gynaecologist , N.Mohab Ali, surgeon. A.Ramsoekh urologist, J.van Horn, orthopedic surgeon.

It was very nice to welcome back from their training in the Netherlands some of our young and enthusiastic instructors.

Logistic support was proficiently given by Mrs.S.van Horn.

Course director for both courses was A.de Wit

Finances:

Again the courses were completely self-supporting, thanks to a moderate registration fee. For the nurses and Health Workers the fee was paid for by their employer.

The costs we made were for the venue, catering, printing of the manuals and certificates and logistic assistance. Most of the course material is owned by the Surinam PTC foundation and where necessary supplemented privately.

Conclusion:

Two successful PTC student courses were held in Paramaribo, mostly for Nurses and other Paramedical persons.

It has become clear that it is impossible to give a course exclusively for doctors.

Apparently most doctors in Suriname interested in Trauma Care have done the course. Just a few doctors registered for this course so we were compelled to combine them with nurses and health workers. This is far from ideal because by adjusting the course to an audience with limited basic knowledge, it becomes too simple and therefore sometimes boring for the doctors. This forces us to reconsider our strategy and try to institutionalize the PTC course: for instance try again to make the course part of the curriculum for Medical Students.

Talks in this direction are under way with the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and with the Director of the Bachelor course in Nursing.

It would be very rewarding if we could organize a specially adapted course for the Health Workers from the Medische Zending and for life guards. People have asked us to consider organizing a special course for the doctors employed by the Regional Health Service which serves most of the small medical offices in the districts. By transferring the organization to those institutions the courses will be less expensive and the number of participants will be more predictable.

Last but not least we are still hoping that in the near future we may welcome some members from the South American PTC organization or even from headquarters in Oxford in Suriname to breathe some fresh air into our rooted PTC routines.

Aagje P.M.de Wit
PTC representative for Suriname

Paramaribo 24-10-2007