



IFPCRN Newsletter



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH NETWORKS
Under the Task Force on Research of WONCA

AN INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR PRIMARY CARE RESEARCHERS

Contents

From IFPCRN Chair

IFPCRN evolution and challenges.....1

From the Editor

The First International Annual Primary Health Care Conference in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.....2

From PCRNs

Collaborating across an ocean.....3

Bangladesh Primary Care Network.....4

Web Conference. Fostering PC/FM networks.....6

Meetings.....7

IFPCRN Website.....8

From IFPCRN Chair

IFPCRN evolution and challenges

Since our last newsletter where we discussed the establishment of a regional structure we have continued to expand and have had one very productive informal meeting 20 January in Abu Dhabi as part of an International Primary Care Conference. At that conference Prof. Waris Qidwai presented some of the information that will be in our next paper (see below), and I had the opportunity to discuss the importance of primary care research.

Our small informal meeting was attended by Drs. Frank Dobbs (Northern Ireland), Francisco Gómez-Clavelina (Mexico), Christos Lionis (Greece), Juan Mandive (Spain), Waris Qidwai (Pakistan), and Alfred Loh (CEO of Wonca, Singapore) and myself. Some information about the IFPCRN was reviewed, and noted the excellent support we are getting from Wonca in terms of our list server and website.

At this meeting we discussed several issues. One was the possibility of a Wonca Research Journal (in which the IFPCRN would have a major role). We decided that while this idea has great merit it should not be done at this time due to the limitation of resources – we would

want to be able to assure the journal’s long-term success. There are a number of venues for publication now and we would have to be sure that the Journal would serve sufficient purpose to be worth the time and expense.

The second area of discussion was the potential for more involvement of the IFPCRN with the European networks, and that we need to have a plan to get in touch with more of them. Unfortunately, this has not really happened yet. We thought there would be considerable utility in having more networks communicating with each other, but this may require staff to periodically solicit input for the newsletter or the IFPCRN list server.

Prof. Waris Qidwai (Pakistan) is continuing to make wonderful progress on our article: “The role of Family Doctors in changing health care systems around the world: a perspective from the International Federation of Primary Care Research Networks (IFPCRN).” There are 38 IFPCRN contributors from 22 different countries.

We should see if Wonca would want to publish the individual submissions as a book. Waris also suggested that we could disseminate this as a “State of FM” series on the Web at the Wonca Website – This could then be easily printed – and updating the information would not be too difficult.

Prof. Manfred Maier has continued his work on another IFPCRN paper, “The Relationship Between Scientific Publications in General Practice and the Status of the Discipline in Different Countries.” (Heide Lingard and Manfred Maier), Dept. General Practice, MUV, Austria. They are doing an extensive review to begin this work.

At our small meeting the most important issue seen by all of us was the development of a secretariat and some funding to support this. Christos Lionis suggested some funding might be available through EGPRN sources such as the Marie Curie foundation.

As I write this we are headed for our next informal meeting in Florence, Italy in conjunction with Wonca Europe. Here we will search out new studies, look for ways to improve our funding base and develop a secretariat, improve our output and provide better support for fledgling networks. I hope many of you can join us.

Please take the time to look through this issue for reports regarding PCRN activities in Bangladesh, Canada, Mexico, and Brazil. My thanks as always to Prof. Francisco Gomez-Clavelina for his work as editor of our newsletter.

Finally, on a personal note, I ask each of us, in our own way, to work to help bring some measure of peace and understanding to this very troubled world. Let us focus, and encourage others to focus, on working towards the things we agree on. Safety and health for our families and communities will be a wonderful start!

*John W. Beasley, MD
Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin
Chair, IFPCRN*

From the Editor

The First International Annual Primary Health Care Conference in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

“The Challenges in Primary Care” was the theme of this conference which was held in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, January 21-23, 2006.

This meeting was under the patronage of *H.H. Sheikh Hamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan*, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the General Authority for Health Services for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and with collaboration of:

- Council of Health Ministers Cooperation for GCC States World Federation For Medical Education-WFME
- InterRAI
- North America Primary Care Research Group - NAPCRG
- International Federation of Primary Care Research Network - IFPCRN
- European Primary Care Research Network - EPCRN

- Middle-East Primary Care Research Network - MEPCRN
- World Organization of National Colleges, Academies and Academic Associations of General Practitioners/Family Physicians – WONCA
- Medi+WORLD International

A three day program included 75 invited speakers, who represented 24 countries as well as the United Arab Emirates. Chairman of the Scientific Committee was Dr Abdulrazak Abyad, who was ably assisted by the Advisory Committee, including Dr Tawfik Khoja, Director General Executive Board, Council of Health Ministers Cooperation for GCC States, Emeritus Professor John Beasley, University of Wisconsin, Dr Fawzi Amin, Assistant Undersecretary for Planning & Training, Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Bahrain and Dr Ahmed Abdellatif, WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean.



Some speakers invited to the conference: Alfred Loh, Nabil Yasin Kurashi, Abdulrazak Abyad, Michael Kidd, Francisco Gómez-Clavelina, Waris Qidwai, Christos Lionis.

The key features of the conference were:

- Models of Primary Care
- Family Medicine Development
- Primary Care Research
- Prevention in Practice
- Maternal and Child Health
- Elderly Care

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- Cultural issues and Health Beliefs
- Evidence-based Practice
- Information Technology
- Quality in Patient Care
- Social and Public Health Medicine
- Ethics in Healthcare
- Primary Health Care Issues
- Dental and Oral Health

This conference was of very high level of academic value for all the attendants, who had a great opportunity to share knowledge and experiences.

This was the first primary care conference to be held in Persian Gulf and attracted over 500 delegates from the region. The results of this conference will have a high impact over the development and improvement of regional primary care services. Congratulations!

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From PCRNs

Collaborating Across an Ocean

Vinita Mahtani, a family physician researcher from Spain, came to Edmonton, Alberta, Canada to study at the International Institute of Qualitative Methodologies. There she met Donna Manca, the Clinical Director of the Alberta Family Practice Research Network (AFPRN).

During Vinita's visit she had a chance to get a glance of the similarities and differences of the two different health care systems and thought about how this could affect the physician's everyday work. Vinita wondered, "What are the advantages and disadvantages of the way primary care physician's practice medicine due to differences in the organization of primary care services in Alberta and the Canary Islands?" Vinita's curiosity fuelled the development of a research project. The exchange of knowledge and experience between Vinita and Donna opened a channel that could link primary care physicians in these two countries.

The question is best suited to a qualitative approach. Mixed methods will be used. The design of the study had to address the barriers of distance and lack of funding. To make it feasible the researchers had to use data collection strategies that could be used in spite of the physical distance of the participants, and be supported



Donna Manca and Vinita Mahtani

by institutions interested in opening an international communication path for physicians in primary care.

Phase one of the study will develop documents that provide enough information to the colleagues of the other country to understand the structure of primary care. On one hand diaries will be developed about what a typical day in practice is like from the perspective of Canadian and Spanish doctors. These can be analyzed using Narrative analysis. On the other hand, another document describing the organizational structure of each country will be developed.

During the second phase of the study these documents will be translated so that the Spanish doctors can read about the situation in Canada and the Canadian doctors can read about the situation in Spain. They will be asked to reflect and criticize, in a constructive way, on the primary care physician's context and work in the other country. Content analysis will be done and the results will be provided back to the participants. Thus a participatory methodology will be used to facilitate the development of a dialogue between Spanish and Canadian family physicians.

The major barrier encountered with this international project was the differences in ethical requirements between the two countries. In Canada this type of project required ethical approval through an ethical board. This hurdle was overcome by submitting a proposal to the ethical board of the University of Alberta. Ethical approval was not required in Spain for this type of protocol.

This across the ocean project provides a link between physicians from two different countries and an opportunity to collaborate on many levels. Though there are many differences between the two countries many of the issues and concerns of family physicians may be similar. We look forward to the learning we will achieve in doing this study. It is our responsibility to share the knowledge with who ever can make good use of it.

Acknowledgements:

The Alberta Family Practice Research Network
The Department of Family Medicine, University of Alberta
Health Care Services of the Canary Islands
Scientific Society of Family Physicians of the Canary Islands
College of Physicians of Santa Cruz de Tenerife

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Bangladesh Primary Care Research Network (BPCRn)

Family Medicine in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a small country in South Asia with an area of 1,44,000 sq. km. and a population of over 140 million. The population density is 1060 per sq. km. (approx.). It is one of the most densely populated countries of the world.

Right to healthcare was recognized as a fundamental right for every Bangladeshi citizen in the very first constitution of the newly liberated People's Republic of Bangladesh in 1972. Over the years 341 health complexes and 2329 health centres have been established in the country by the Government at the sub-district and union levels respectively, which are the two smallest administrative units of Bangladesh. These are staffed by graduate physicians and number of nurses, paramedics, traditional birth attendants and laboratory technicians. However in most cases these are under-staffed.

The physician: patient ratio in Bangladesh is 1:4775. Most physicians are based in urban areas meaning that the scenario is even poorer in the rural communities, where primary health care is provided mostly by quacks, rural medical practitioners, traditional medicine practitioners and paramedics. In the urban areas people mainly depend on medical graduates and specialists for their every day health needs.



Panoramic view of Dhaka's streets, Bangladesh

Family medicine has been recognized as an independent specialty in Bangladesh for just over a year and training programme for residents specializing in this branch has recently been introduced. The crude reality however is that the country will have to wait for several more years for her first set of qualified Family Physicians.

Bangladesh Primary Care Research Network

Bangladesh Primary Care Research Network (BPCRn) has been established, with active cooperation from the International Federation of Primary Care Research Networks (IFPCRn) and the Pakistan Primary Care Research Network (PPCRn). The unique characteristic of BPCRn is that this newly established organization is headed by and comprises mostly of specialists with a passionate approach to Family Medicine, while it also includes graduate general practitioners. BPCRn looks forward to collaboration with other regional and international primary care research networks and primary health care societies. It is expected that such collaboration will prove beneficial for the cause of Family Medicine and ultimately primary health care not only in Bangladesh, but in the entire South Asian region.

Goals of BPCRn

- Vision Statement
To promote skills in research methodology among Family Physicians.
- To promote and support primary health care research in Bangladesh.

- To identify issues in Family Medicine and to address them through research based on sound scientific principles.
- To conduct affairs of the network through the following office bearers to be elected for a period of three years by the members of the group
Chairman (1 no.)
Vice-Chairman (1-3 nos.)
Honorary Secretary (1 no.)
Treasurer (1 no.)
Scientific Secretary (1 no.)
Member (1-5 nos.)
- The network will have an Advisory Committee comprising of eminent local, regional and international Family Medicine Specialists and physicians.
- To ensure regular interaction between network members through meetings and e-mails.
- To conduct research to influence Government policy in favor of Family Medicine and primary health care.
- To support and promote collaboration between academic physicians interested in Family Medicine working at institutions and medical university with those working in the community.
- To help improve quality of care provided to patients in the community by general practitioners through research.
- To present works of the network at national and international forums and journals.
- To establish collaboration with regional and international Family Medicine Associations and Primary Care Research Networks.

Members of BPCRn

BPCRn currently has ten members drawn from different specialties of medical science. They meet at least once a month at Better Health Care in Dhaka to exchange views and to implement and take forward the goals of BPCRn. Members of BPCRn also actively volunteer in the research activities of the Network.

Office Bearers of BPCRn for 2006-2009

Chairman: Dr. Mamun-Al-Mahtab

Vice-Chairman: Dr. Uttam Kumar Barua

Honorary Secretary: Dr. K. M. Mamun Murshed

Treasurer: Dr. Nuzhat Choudhury

Scientific Secretary: Dr. Md. Mahbubur Rahman

Advisors of BPCRn

Professor John W. Beasley, MD

Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin
Wisconsin, USA & Chairman of International Federation of Primary Care Research Network (IFPCRn)

Professor Francisco J. Gómez Clavelina MD

Professor, Department of Family Medicine,
National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM)
President of Academy of Family Medicine Professors of Mexico (AMPMF) & Vice Chair, International Federation of Primary Care Research Networks (IFPCRn)

Professor Salimur Rahman FCPS

Professor of Department of Hepatology,
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University.
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Dr. Waris Qidwai MCPS, FCPS

Associate Professor, Department of Family Medicine,
Aga Khan University Karachi, Pakistan
& Member of the Steering Committee
International Federation of Primary Care Research Network (IFPCRn)

Dr. Javid Hamid Farooqi MBBS, DFM, MSc FM

Primary Care Physician, General Authority of Health Services, Primary Care Department
Abu Dhabi, UAE

Accomplishments of BPCRn

Since its inception in 2006, BPCRn has conducted number of scientific activities. The first paper of BPCRn on past, present and future of Family Medicine in Bangladesh has been accepted by the Middle East Journal of Family Medicine.

BPCRn is presenting two posters on the prevalence of hepatitis B virus in Bangladeshi children and aetiology of acute viral hepatitis in Bangladeshi pregnant women respectively at the 12th Regional Conference of WONCA Europe ESGP/FM in Florence, Italy in August 2006. Dr. Mamun-Al-Mahtab, founder Chairman, BPCRn will also present a talk at the meeting.

BPCRn has recently completed the first patient satisfaction study in Dhaka city. The paper is currently under preparation.

BPCRN is in dialogue with European General Practice Research Network and Bosnia and Herzegovina Primary Care Research Network to explore possibilities of joint research.

In addition Dr. Mamun-Al-Mahtab, founder Chairman, BPCRN is working closely with Professor Christos Lionis, Dr. Abdul Razk Abyad, Senior Home Advisor, General Authority for Health Services for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, UAE, Dr. Peter Martelli, University of California at Berkeley, USA and Dr. Bader Alm Mustafa, Head of Training and Education, Qatif Primary Health Care, KSA for jointly writing a review on research in countries where GP/FM is less developed.

*Dr. Mamun-Al-Mahtab,
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Web Conference. Fostering PC/FM networks

Family medicine is a specialty without limit to take care of people. Independent of age, gender or medical problem, we are there giving our best to improve health care. However to make more and better for the future of family medicine we need to push academic family medicine increasing our publishing, sharp our methodology and development our understand about our cost effective activities^{1,2,3,4}.

One way to reach this goals it is sharing experience and “wisdom” between family doctors of different countries. Because family physicians are not so many, (we always think that more students could be family doctors- that is an everlasting concern) to make friend with the same mission in life make us develop a better care in our home.

International congress, fellowship, “tourist visits” are interesting to accomplish this points. However the cost is prohibitive and are not regular activities, neither a routine. What can we do to improve the “sharing scenario” for international experiences and learn more from each other?

In **SOBRAMFA**- Brazilian Society of Family Medicine and **APAMEFA**- Pan American Association for Academic Family Medicine we had a great experience coming from Dr. Francisco J. Gómez- Clavelina from **UNAM** –National Autonomie University of Mexico. In April 2005, Dr. Gómez Clavelina invited Dr. Pablo Gonzalez Blasco, SOBRAMFA’s Scientific Director to participate in a

Mexican Conference using web cam. The point was in sharing the Brazilian experience in fostering family medicine through education and developing leaderships. This educational experience was amazing and had great results among SOBRAMFA board and memberships. We understood that this methodology of web cam could increase our abilities in sharing knowledge, and decrease distance. Almost without limits, like our family medicine practice!

From this point on we started thinking about the methodology and practical applications in our educational environment. What are the news? As SOBRAMFA leads the Department of Family Medicine in São Paulo Medical Association (**APM**) we are going to incorporate the web cam methodology for the monthly conferences in APM Association in 2006.

This will allow us to have several friends –professors and leaders in family medicine around the world- closer and teaching our students and residents and the Brazilian audience www.sobramfa.com.br/agenda.php. And better than this, more educational, is that the students will be in charge to make contact with these international fellows and make the web conference happen.

Using web cam, international friends and family medicine to push students in our specialty! No limits in care, no limits in sharing! Making better and more to fostering the future of Family Medicine!

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Meetings



Florence ITALY

27 - 30 August 2006

Wonca
World family doctors
EUROPE Caring for people

12th Regional Conference WONCA Europe

Towards Medical Renaissance

Bridging the gap
between Biology and Humanities

<http://www.woncaeurope2006.org>



NORTH AMERICAN
PRIMARY CARE
RESEARCH GROUP

Organization
Membership
Meetings
Newsletter
Links

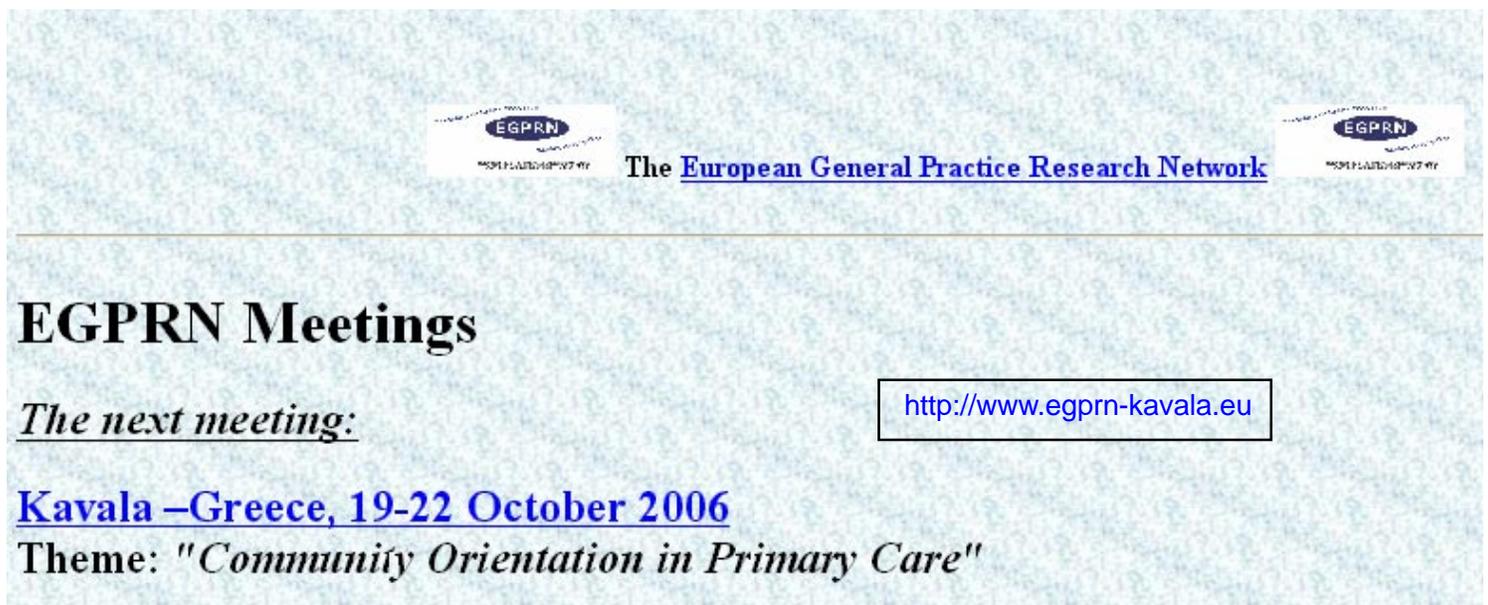
CONFERENCE CALENDAR

[Future NAPCRG Meetings](#)

Future NAPCRG Annual Meetings

34th NAPCRG Annual Meeting
October 15-18, 2006 (Sunday-Wednesday pattern)
Hilton El Conquistador
Tucson, Ariz

<http://www.napcrg.org>



EGPRN

The [European General Practice Research Network](#)

EGPRN

EGPRN Meetings

The next meeting:

<http://www.egprn-kavala.eu>

Kavala –Greece, 19-22 October 2006
Theme: "Community Orientation in Primary Care"



The screenshot shows the IFPCRN website interface. On the left is a vertical navigation menu with buttons for HOME, About IFPCRN, Steering Committee, Documents, Member list, News, Tools for research, Links, Photos, and Sign up. Below the menu is a small icon and the text 'Last up to date of this Web site: July 4th, 2006'. The main content area features the IFPCRN logo (a stylized figure holding a globe), the title 'International Federation of Primary Care Research Networks', and the text 'Under the Task Force on Research of The World Organization of Family Doctors'. Below this is a world map and the WONCA logo with the tagline 'World family doctors. Caring for people'. At the bottom of the page, there is a copyright notice: 'Copyright © 2006 IFPCRN All rights reserved About IFPCRN Web site'.

<http://www.ifpcrn.org>

The IFPCRN continues to grow, noting that there are now 152 members representing 45 networks in 41 countries. (Of course, we continue to welcome members who, although they may not have a network, who are interested in Primary Care Research Networks.)

Help us to update the member list at [IFPCRN Website](http://www.ifpcrn.org).

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Special thanks to *Stefany Casandra Zamudio-Sánchez* for her valuable help on the edition of this issue of IFPCRN Newsletter.

Visit IFPCRN website. Contact with many other researchers and Primary Care Research Networks (PCRNs).

- Check memberlist of researchers and PCRNs
- Free download IFPCRN Newsletter issues
- More than 500 useful internet links
- Tools for researchers

Explore our website and send us your comments and suggestions.

We want to improve IFPCRN website. As member of IFPCRN you can help to this achievement. Using the IFPCRN listserv, a short questionnaire will be send to you on August 2006, do not hesitate to answer it, please.

IFPCRN Newsletter will receive the scientific contributions of every IFPCRN and WONCA members, as well as comments, letters, PCRNs' reports and official announcements of scientific meetings.

Francisco J. Gómez-Clavelina
 Editor

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 Website <http://www.ifpcrn.org>



**International Federation
of Primary Care Research Networks**
Organized under WONCA
The World Organization of Family Doctors
Membership Registration



Type of Membership: Individual Network

If network membership, What is the name of that network?

What is your network role (e.g. director, executive, member)? _____

Your name _____

Degree/Title _____ Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Postal/Zip Code _____ Country _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail address _____

Current research interests and projects (personal and/or network projects)

_____ () Personal () Network

_____ () Personal () Network

_____ () Personal () Network

Please add me to the email listserver Yes No

Comments? _____

Please return to:

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Note: You can download this membership registration from IFPCRN Website