

National Associations of Hospice and Palliative care – question and answer sheet Version 2 April 06

What is the aim of the network?

To support skill sharing, joined up working and support the development of national associations in their work to advance hospice and palliative care.

What is the history of the network up to now?

There have been two summits of national associations – one linked to the European Association of Palliative Care Conference in the Hague in 2003 and another linked to the Asia Pacific Hospice Network in 2005 in Korea. Reports of these meetings are at www.wwpca.net.

There has also been a satellite meeting in 2005 for European National Associations, and an EAPC task force established in 2006 to build links between European national associations.

What has this achieved so far?

The network has been instrumental in the development of World Hospice and Palliative Care Day (see www.worldday.org). This produced a report “Suffering at the end of life: the state of the world” – which is available from <http://www.worldday.org/reports.asp>

The Korea summit produced the Korea declaration – which has been used in lobbying with governments around the world. A number of useful tools were produced, including an advocacy tool kit – available at www.wwpca.net

As a result of close working between the International Association of Hospice and Palliative Care and the network there was effective lobbying of the WHO World Health Assembly meeting in May 2005 to incorporate palliative care more fully into the WHO Cancer Resolution.

Similarly, there was a successful letter writing campaign in 2006 for a palliative care session at the Toronto AIDS conference, and ongoing global links and awareness raising in this process.

How is the network organised?

All national associations are invited to summit meetings.

As agreed at the Korea meeting, all national associations will be consulted during the lead up to the 2007 summit with a proposal on whether to formalise the network with terms of reference including details of membership and accountability.

At the 2007 meeting there will also be discussion of the business plan and report backs from working groups – these include an Education and Training Group; Drugs Issues Group; Advocacy Group; Information Group; Changes in IT Working Group (short term); Quality and Standards Group; Research Group; Organisation Development Group; Children’s Services Group; Ethics Committee; World Hospice and Palliative Care Day Group. Chairs of these groups have been identified but we would welcome involvement from national associations on these issues.

There will also be suggestions on name (with a proposal from the steering group to call the network the Worldwide Palliative Care Alliance).

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There is a steering group that grew out of the organising committee for the 2005 summit. The steering group has members from across the world – generally two people from national associations per region. Members are as follows Dr Cynthia Goh (Singapore) - co-Chair; David Prail (UK) - co-Chair; Stephen Conner (USA); Sharon Baxter (Canada); Dr Daniela Mosiou (Romania); Dr Faith Mwangi Powell (Uganda); Dr Liz Gwyther (South Africa); Dr Roberto Wenk (Argentina), Professor David Currow (Australia) and Dr Dinesh Goswami (India). Secretariat support is provided by Help the Hospices, UK.

What are the links between the network of national associations and pan national and international organisations?

The network works in close collaboration with organisations such as IAHPC and pan national organisations such as the African Palliative Care Association.

The steering group has highlighted key values of work include wishing to collaborate and avoid duplication of effort.

What are future plans?

The Network next plans to meet in Africa linked to the African Palliative Care Association conference (tentatively scheduled for November 2007 in Kenya). The meeting will be a further opportunity to agree how to make an impact for patients and their families and share how national associations can move forward with this work.

If you would like a copy of the work plans for the groups, contact Nick – see below

How can I get involved?

Contact
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Help the Hospices
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There is a list of national association contacts which we are presently updating – please let us know of your contact details.

Isn't this just a talk shop?

There would be no point in continuing this activity if people were concerned if it was.

A survey of participants at the 2005 summit unanimously agreed it would be useful to meet again, create greater formal procedures for the network and work towards a world with universal access to quality palliative care.