

MULTI-PROFESSIONAL WEEK AT ST CHRISTOPHER'S HOSPICE

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St Christofer's Hospice in London has been founded by Dame Cicely Saunders in 1967. Since then, only in England there were 220 new hospices opened, while similar forms of palliative/hospice care have been developed throughout the world (approx 120 countries). St Christopher's Hospice was from the outset a prototype of modern palliative care based on Cecily Sounder's principles. There are three fundamental principles:

1. The principle of the quality of life: 'Every man is important until the very last moment of his/her life. It is necessary to do everything that the patient lives in piece until he/she dies.'
2. The concept of 'total pain' has to be accepted, i.e. the experience of pain not only has physical elements, but also psychological, social and spiritual ones.
3. Education and clinical research is necessary for the development of palliative care (evaluation of hospice influence on efficacy of local services in end of life care, morphine medication in pain therapy, etc..).

Driven by the wish to learn from the very source of knowledge, our palliative team from Pula decided to enroll in multiprofessional education at St Christopher's hospice. In November 2008 our applications for „Multiprofessional week in palliative care“ were accepted. Our team consisted of Dragan Trivanović, Tomislav Peharda, Sonja Grozić Živolić; head of administrative depart for health & social care for the region of Istria, while for the city of Pula there was Silvija Hrelja, and three members of palliative care team: Julijana Franinović Marković, Irena Grahovac i Danica Kuzmanović. We were joined by our non-medical volunteer



Members of Pula's team and prof. Nigel Sykes



dr. Trivanović and dr. Peharda in discussion with colleagues from India



Prof. David Olivier, course leader



Attending the course



Main entrance to St Christopher's Hospice

Dorina Vlakančić. Course leaders were Nigel Sykes, David Olivier, Kathy Burn and Andrew Goodhaed. Course participants were from Ireland, Great Britain, Italy, France, Portugal, India, Korea, Uganda etc. There were 30 participants altogether.

St Christopher's Hospice is giving palliative care to approx. 2 million inhabitants of London area. The care for patients and families is organised in three levels:

- Out-patients: in house palliative care, 24 hours a day for 1887 patients annually. Support to patient's families in the last days of life (162 families)
- In-patients: taking care for 847 patients / 48 beds in hospice annually
- In our daily centre: taking care for 1500 patients, giving social, psychological and spiritual care

Alongside the professionals, palliative care is provided by 600 volunteers. St Christopher's Educational Center is one of the most renown in the world. Annually 5000 people enroll to various forms of education. For the overall operation of St Christopher's Hospice it is necessary to provide approx 7.15 million pounds sterling. The financing comes partially from National Health Service (approx 28%), while

the remaining part is obtained through donations and various foundations. The main patron of the hospice is Princess Anne. Our work was organised in lectures and workshops from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The emphasis was on team, multi-professional and multinational work. The development of the team work in each group was very interesting, as well as the sharing different experiences with terminally ill patients, and the final layout of results. Although the work was exhausting, the relationship between the course leader and participants, and participants themselves, was friendly and constructive. Every our question was addressed either immediately, or at latest by tomorrow when we were given additional literature and data. Symptom control and pain control was aimed to doctors, and there were plenty of examples and therapeutical directions. Part of education focused on work with families, especially when children were involved, was extremely demanding. Other issues were spirituality, etical issues, care for caregivers, suport and team supervision, sexuality.

We participated in several workshops which operate within St Christopher's Hospice (photography, musical and ceramic workshops). Our experience in St Christopher's Hospice was fruitful on several levels:

- We realised that the care for terminally ill patients in Istrian County and Pula could be organised in better ways
- It is necessary to develop cooperation, especially professional communication and team work
- Adaptation of palliative principles and care in our culturalogical surroundings and possibilities is necessary, alongside the existing health services, primary and secondary health care, home care and volunteers
- Volunteer work is precious for palliative care, but it can not be a substitute for professional work
- Good and continuous education is basic condition for quality palliative care

The visit was sponsored financially by Istian County and by Pula city communities, which confirms the interest and wish of local governments in founding of the palliative care in our region.