

The Seventh Francophone Course Report

From 30th April to 1st June 2018

International Programmes

Hospice Africa Uganda



1. Introduction

The 7th Francophone initiators' course hosted by Hospice Africa Uganda (HAU) in Kampala commenced on 30th April, 2018 and was successfully completed on 1st June, 2018. It brought together sixteen health care professionals from nine different African Francophone countries in leadership and managerial positions but also those doing clinical and community care. The training was done entirely in French and equipped students with palliative care knowledge and the skills to enable them to develop or enhance palliative care services in their own countries.

Forty five applications were received from 12 countries for the course although only 17 students were admitted. Of those admitted one applicant missed participating on the course as the visa was denied. The participants included 5 doctors, 2 medical assistants, 6 nurses, 2 social workers and 1 administrator. The 16 participants were from 9 African Francophone countries. HAU arranged airport transfers for all students and international facilitators.



It was a comprehensive training that covered a number of aspects in Palliative care with clinical hands on experience. The course was structured into three sections: The first two weeks covered theoretical aspects in palliative care, two weeks later were for clinical hands on experience while the final week exposed participants to training skills in palliative care so as to cascade knowledge to others. The course was coordinated by the IP team with support from other HAU departments.

The training was supported by 21 facilitators, ten of whom were bilingual (French and English) and coming from various parts of the world other than Uganda. The Ugandan facilitators came from partner organisations and were chosen according to their expertise.

2. Aim of the Training

To equip health care professionals with knowledge and skills to implement sustainable and high standard African palliative care services, advocate, and teach palliative care to others.

2.1. Specific objectives of the course

- **Patients Care:** To equip participants with knowledge and skills in impeccable assessment and management of pain and symptoms in palliative care patients
- **Advocacy:** To enhance students' understanding of the role of partnerships and collaborations in palliative care advocacy
- **Teaching:** To enhance the confidence of students in teaching and advocating for palliative care services
- **Developing Palliative Care Services in their own country:** to equip students with knowledge and skills of developing and sustaining palliative care services.

3. Activities

3.1. Recruitment process for the participants

Adverts were sent out in November 2017, applications were received and a meeting was held to select successful applicants for admission. The selection criteria was based on the following requirements; health care professionals working or about to work in a PC setting; willingness to disseminate PC knowledge and skills acquired; demonstrate good oral and written French; recommendations from two referees; applicant's employer's willingness to support PC service; and ability to pay fully or contribute to the course fees.

3.2 Opening ceremony

This was again graced by the Apostolic Nuncio to Uganda His Grace Michael Blume, who was the chief guest.

There was representation from partner organisations that included; the ex-clinical service commissioner from Ministry of Health, Dr. Amandua Jacinto. Members from the different departments of HAU also attended the ceremony which was concluded with break tea.

3.3 Face to face



Jim the president of HA (SP) facilitating a session during the face to face period

Students had 'face to face' lessons from Monday to Friday for the first two weeks of the course. The teaching involved a variety of teaching methods including; group discussions, role plays, plenary sessions, brainstorming, drama, video demonstrations, case studies and interactive lectures. This blending equipped students with knowledge on various concepts of palliative care. Students evaluated the quality of the teaching during the face to face sessions positively, with 88% of students rating it either 'Very

Good' or 'Excellent'.

3.4 Clinical Placement

Students were divided into three groups and each group was placed at one of the three sites of HAU to gain practical experience following the face to face lessons. The experience included: taking holistic patient history, carrying out clinical examinations of patients and participating in pain assessment and management at the hospice facility, outreach clinics, home and hospital visits. They also participated in other non-clinical activities like prayer, record-keeping, journal clubs and case conferences that were done at the different sites. The placement supported students to develop and enhance their palliative care skills and competences, and above all, to see how home-based care in practical which is not common in most French-speaking countries.

3.4 Training of trainers module

In the fifth week of the face to face period, students were introduced to the Training of Trainers' (TOT) module. They were taught how to plan a training session and each student got an opportunity to plan and conduct one teaching session. This activity equipped students with skills and confidence to teach others but also to advocate for palliative care services in own work places.

All students' TOT sessions were video recorded and shared with students for self-evaluation. They also received feedback from the facilitators and fellow students.

3.5 Visit to Partner Organisations

All students got the opportunity to visit three partner organisations i.e. African Palliative care Association Uganda (APCA), Palliative Care Association of Uganda (PCAU) and Mulago Palliative Care Unit (MPCU). Students were very eager to learn about the work of these organisations and how they support the integration of PC in country health systems.

1.1. Assessments

All the students were given a pre-test on the first day of the course to gauge their knowledge in palliative care. However, there were 3 late arrivals who did the pre-test later on other days they had reported to class. All students also did a written examination after their placement and fifteen of them were above the pass mark 50%. The performance of the one student who was below the pass mark was attributed to language barrier as he was more fluent in Arabic than French.

Details of the examination results are in Appendix IV.

3.6 Welfare

All students were accommodated at Acactus hotel while international facilitators were either in Fazal or Dr. Anne's house in Munyonyo. The service in Fazal and Dr. Anne's house was well appreciated. The hotel staff's hospitality was very good however meals at Acactus hotel were less appreciated, as well as the lack of hot water in the room.

In addition, HAU organized a students' tour where students and some facilitators visited the Uganda Martyrs shrine in Namugongo and the source of river Nile in Jinja. They loved seeing the countryside, being on the boat cruise, and enjoyed Tilapia fish. Other than the tour students also had a party at Professor Anne's home. It is here that they not only exhibited their cultural costumes but also danced to the different African tunes.



There were a few students who encountered medical problems which were managed with self-medication. One student sustained an ankle sprain on the first day of the course while walking back to the hotel. This was well managed at HAU and by the time of her return, she had recovered and was in good condition. We had arranged for them to walk back to the hotel after class every day so they could get some exercise, but because of the incident that happened to their colleague, we changed this arrangement. They were chauffeured to and from the hotel, though the majority preferred to walk back in the evening.

3.7 Closing ceremony

The course concluded with a closing ceremony on 1st June after five weeks of comprehensive learning. All students were awarded certificates acknowledging their performance and participation in the training. The closing ceremony was attended by a number of HAU team members. The proceedings were captured by HAU communications team and highlights were published on the HAU Facebook and Twitter pages.

4 One on One Country interviews

A number of facilitators on the Francophone course interviewed students on the state of palliative care in each country and the way forward. The overall assessment indicated that all countries are still in the initial stages of establishing palliative care services and the concept has not been well-embraced by their governments. Out of the 9 countries that participated on the course, only Cameroun, DRC and Benin have oral liquid morphine. Despite its availability, morphine is not easily accessible and affordable to majority of patients. The state of palliative care services for each country is summarised in Appendix I.

5 Overall Evaluation of the Course – short term impact to students

A majority of the students rated the course as excellent or very good and they acknowledged its relevance to their practice. In addition to the training, students also enjoyed leading prayers during the daily morning team briefs.

6 Conclusion

The course was very relevant to all the participants and they were very enthusiastic to return and put into practice what they learned. Clinical placement surpassed all the other study techniques.