

# **ESTABLISHING THE ADVANCED PAEDIATRIC LIFE SUPPORT COURSE IN MYANMAR**

## **Conducting instructor and coordinator training**

There is a recognized need for training in all aspects of emergency care within the health system of Myanmar. This has led to the Emergency Medicine Development Program supported by members of ACEM that is actively training leaders in Emergency Medicine in Myanmar through the Diploma and now the Masters of Emergency Medicine.

Myanmar has an extremely young population with over 27% < 14 years of age. Infant mortality is high (48 deaths per 1000 in 2012) with Myanmar ranking 46<sup>th</sup> worst in the world. Consequently paediatric emergencies constitute a large proportion of emergency presentations in general hospitals, primary health care facilities and major paediatric hospitals. Training in paediatric emergencies has been recognized as essential for all front line doctors and nurses.

The APLS course is an internationally recognized course teaching medical and nursing staff the knowledge and skills necessary to competently provide initial management to seriously ill and injured children. The course is conducted by trained instructors over three days and consists of lectures, skills stations, discussions and scenarios. The course has been successfully introduced into a number of developing countries including Vietnam, Cambodia, Fiji and Sri Lanka.

In June 2013 the first APLS courses were held at Children's Hospital number one Yangon Myanmar. 48 candidates including the Emergency Medicine trainees successfully completed the course. On this occasion a totally Australian Faculty was used but plans were made to train local APLS instructors, Course Directors and Coordinators in order to create a capacity for the Myanmar doctors to locally run the APLS course.

It was with this aim that the International Development Fund grant was sought from ACEM.

### **Aims of the project**

The project had 4 principal aims all of which have been completed or exceeded. These were:

- 1) Train the first 12 Myanmar based APLS instructors with an instructor course and instructor candidacy on the provider course
- 2) Train 24 additional Myanmar APLS providers.
- 3) Train the first 2 Myanmar based course coordinators
- 4) Provide the teaching materials and resources necessary to conduct APLS courses in Myanmar

## Project Activities

In February 2015 an APLS course was conducted for Diploma of Emergency Medicine students and other invited candidates with the express aim of identifying suitable people to undergo APLS instructor training. During this course a trainee course director and a trainee coordinator were also identified and the process of training them started.

This course also provided the opportunity to bring teaching materials and resources necessary to run future courses to Yangon for this course. Various pieces of course equipment including mannekins and scenario boxes were organized and left for use on further courses.



Faculty and Students at the completion of the 2015 course.

In June 2017 an APLS refresher day, the inaugural APLS Instructor course, and the fourth APLS provider course were conducted in Yangon with the continuing support of the University of Medicine 1. This first Myanmar APLS instructor course trained 12 candidates who were selected to participate based on their performance on one of the previous Myanmar APLS courses and their profile in positions of leadership and influence in furthering the consolidation of a structured approach in training front line clinicians in the care of acutely unwell and injured children with Myanmar. Following the APLS format, instructor candidates were taught the principles of adult learning, how to teach in a number of formats and how to assess candidates that they will meet on the courses they will teach. Placed in simulated teaching environments the candidates were able to practice their teaching skills and receive immediate feedback from the Australian faculty.

Immediately following the instructor course the 12 new instructor candidates taught on an APLS course under the mentorship of the Australian faculty. This enabled them to immediately utilize the skills that they had learned on the preceding instructor course and enabled proximate essential consolidation of their recently gained knowledge in the conduct and delivery of an APLS course. During this APLS course (the 4<sup>th</sup> in Myanmar) the Australian faculty were also able to identify an individual whom had the necessary clinical credibility, educational prowess and leadership skills to become a local APLS Course Director of subsequent APLS courses. It was also notable in that a local course coordinator was identified and provided capable course coordination with the support of an Australian course coordinator.

Capitalizing on the successes of the 2015 and 2017 courses two further APLS courses were conducted back to back early in 2018. A smaller group of Australian Instructors worked with the local instructors on these courses. The previously identified local course director and course coordinator further developed their abilities in these crucial roles and in combination with their

increasingly confident and capable colleagues set the stage for the independent conduct of APLS courses within Myanmar



## Support for the Project

The project was financially supported in a number of ways

- 1) ACEM International Development Fund
  - a. Provided funding for the APLS coordinators travel and accommodation
  - b. Bought course and Instructor manuals
  - c. Purchased various pieces of equipment and consumables
- 2) APLS Australia
  - a. Allowed the use of the Intellectual Property of the APLS course
  - b. Assisted with the organisation of faculty
  - c. Provided logistical support for equipment and personnel
  - d. Loaned various pieces of equipment
- 3) Yangon University
  - a. Organised venue / lunches / registration / local travel and of course karaoke on the courses
- 4) Individual APLS Instructors
  - a. Provided their own travel and accommodation whilst in Myanmar

We would like to acknowledge the support of many individuals who have supported this project in many ways. Rector Professor Zaw Wai Soe and Dr Aye Thiri Niang were indispensable in ensuring local support and enthusiasm for the courses as well as coordination all the local arrangements. In addition Dr James Kong and Dr Rose Skalicky provided significant in kind support, guidance and local contacts for the Australian faculty in navigating the structures and operations of both the University of Medicine 1 in Yangon and Yangon General and Yangon Children's Hospitals.

Australian Faculty included:

Dr Simon Young	Dr Chris Cooper	Ms Michelle McCarthy
Dr Pascal Gelperowicz	Dr Tracey Merriman	Dr Colin Powell
Dr Stephen Priestley	Dr Jeremy Raftos <sup>[L]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>	Dr Noel Roberts <sup>[L]</sup> <sub>[SEP]</sub>
Dr Christine Sanderson	Dr Adam Skinner	Dr Jane Standish
Dr Kathryn Roberts	Dr Mark Norden	Dr Sanj Fernando
Dr Holly Smith	Dr Sarah James	