

Dr Priyadarshini Kulkarni

Learning to lead

For me, it was a privilege to be selected for the Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) programme. There were participants from several countries, yet we were all from the palliative care family.

What impressed me the most was how everything was organised to perfection right from the time we were received at San Diego airport to the end of the programme. There was no room for confusion; no need to waste time on clarifications.

Right from the first lecture, the objective was to help each participant understand herself as an individual and as a professional. It was a great opportunity to learn from eminent teachers like Dr Frank Ferris, Dr Charles Von Gunten, Dr Kathy Foley, Dr Mary Callway, Dr Liliansa De Lima and Dr Joe Harford.

Situation analyses by different



Dr Kulkarni (centre) flanked by the other two participants from India at one of the sessions.

individuals from different countries revealed that in spite of location-specific problems (even within India!) there were many similarities when it came to palliative care.

It was unusual to have a theatre and drama person work with us during the course, but it really helped us focus on presentation skills. There were “fun” activities and group exercises designed

for us to experience leadership concepts.

Each of us had to make a presentation which was followed by a round of constructive criticism. That was a great exercise in communicating dissent.

A highlight of the programme was the visit to the San Diego Hospice. I couldn't help making comparisons with our Centre—green, open spaces, friendly approach and an eagerness to help. There was a Reflection Room, like our Meditation Room, where anyone could go and spend some quiet time with oneself. Another impressive element was a tower where people could post commemorative photos.

At the end of the programme, the core message was about the importance of building relationships in leadership. One must first know and accept where one stands before preparing to move up. For a good leader, it is not enough to be good in one's own speciality. To lead the community one must build a strong team and enthuse each member to pull together to a higher level of working.

Sequel to Dr Kulkarni's selection to Leadership Initiative Programme

Dr Black's visit to boost efforts of Cipla Centre to teach and reach palliative care

Applauding the contribution of Cipla to palliative care, Dr. Fraser Black, Medical Director, Victoria Hospice, Canada as well as the Associate Director of the PAX (Palliative Access Program) of the International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research (INCTR), promised the support of these organisations in Cipla Centre's efforts to teach and provide palliative care to more and more people.

Dr Black was on a visit to the Centre on April 2 and 3 as part of a leadership and organisational development programme.

The International Palliative Care Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) is a two-year programme to develop leadership skills among palliative care physicians in resource-limited countries around the world. Dr. Priyadarshini Kulkarni, Medical Director, Cipla Centre, selected for the LDI, had participated in the first cohort in San Diego, USA, in February. The objective is to groom a team to become the next generation of national, regional and global palliative care leaders.

Speaking during his visit to the Centre, Dr Black noted: “Ten years ago, on my



Dr Black (in white shirt) during his visit to the wards.

first visit to India, there was hardly any awareness about palliative care. This year, of the 22 participants chosen from the many hundred applicants for LDI from 15 countries, three were from India—from Pune, Hyderabad and Kochi. This shows the increasing reach of palliative care in India.”

“While there are pockets of excellence like the Cipla Centre, there is a need for greater efforts to convince governments to support palliative care, to introduce palliative care in medical curricula and to convince more and more doctors

about the role of palliative care,” Dr Black added.

Doug Ennals, Social Worker Consultant to INCTR, who accompanied Dr Black to the Centre, interacted with the medical social worker team and observed them at work. He also went with the home care team on their visits getting a firsthand experience of conditions at some of the homes and how the team ensured uninterrupted care.

The INCTR is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation funded in 1998 by the UICC (International Union Against Cancer) and the Institute Pasteur in Brussels. It is dedicated to helping build capacity for cancer treatment and research in countries where such capacity is presently limited.

The goal of the PAX programme is to assist developing countries in initiating and sustaining effective palliative care programmes for their countries in order to provide an improved quality of life for patients living with life-limiting illnesses. Through the work of the PAX programme, Dr. Black has been involved with palliative care initiatives in many countries including Nepal, India, Tanzania and Brazil.