

Medical Staff Focus

November 1997

Over 200 Attend 28th Annual Medical Symposium



Over 200 medical professionals attended the Arno A. Roscher, M.D., 28th Annual Symposium last month.

Participants, from left, included Toh-Bin Lim, M.D.; Sohan Dua, M.D.; Chief of Staff Gary Lawson, M.D.; Arno Roscher, M.D.; Mayer B. Davidson, M.D., President, American Diabetes Association, who delivered the keynote speech on "Diabetes: Recent Discoveries... Future Promises;" Reza Bonabi, M.D., program director & chairman, CME; Cyrus Lavian, M.D.; and Howard Detwiler, M.D.

Below, Dr. Arno Roscher addresses the participants at the annual Medical Symposium, which is named in his honor.

Serving as a Missionary Surgeon in Nepal a Rewarding Experience

by Toh-Bin Lim, M.D., FRCS(C), FACS



When one thinks of the kingdom of Nepal, one pictures the majestic Himalaya mountains and Mt. Everest, with Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpas trekking the icy slopes and glacial crevases.

During 1996, I had the opportunity to work as a volunteer missionary surgeon in a mission hospital in the remote western region of Nepal at the 4,000-meter elevation. Tansen Hospital, established in 1955, is now part of the United Mission to Nepal, a cooperative effort between the people of Nepal and 39 Christian organizations from 18 countries.

The hospital has 129 beds, 65% of which are dedicated to a very busy surgical service. The 17 medical staff members are mostly from Europe, with two from Australia and two from the United States. There are family physicians, internists, pediatricians, midwives and three surgeons who manage all areas of surgical care. Over 500 patients attend outpatient clinics every day, six days a week. Patients are often carried through narrow mountain paths for two or three days to reach the hospital, often in critical condition. Patients with trauma, burns,

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Missionary Surgeon in Nepal

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Dr. Lim (left) and other volunteers conduct surgery under challenging conditions in Nepal.

intestinal obstruction and other acute surgical problems as well as tropical diseases, tuberculosis, typhoid fever, leprosy and snake bites are seen each day. At times, the volume of patients with such a wide spectrum of pathology can be overwhelming. While I was there, we saw cases of tetanus, measles, leprosy, tuberculous abscess in the abdomen, and ascariis obstructing the common bile duct. The x-ray and laboratory facilities are very

limited. One quickly resorts to rely on the fundamental skills of medical history taking and physical examination.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to have served the Nepalese people, who are most gracious and appreciative of whatever help they receive. It was truly a learning, humbling and very rewarding experience. ■

About Nepal

Nepal is a small land-locked mountain kingdom located between India on the south, and China on the north. It has over 22 million people, with 88% Hindus, 8% Buddhists and 3% Muslims. The government is a constitutional monarchy with a king as the head of state. The king appoints the prime minister, who heads the Council of Ministers. Nepal has 1500 years of history. Its culture and customs are closely related to northern India. The nation's health system and infrastructure are still not well organized or financed. Health facilities in general are poorly equipped and maintained. The majority of the people live in remote mountain villages in poverty and deprivation and face difficult, rugged terrain that limits efficient means of transportation. Especially in rural areas, there is poor nutrition and sanitation, inadequate housing and a general absence of modern medical care and other social services. ■

Office Managers Learn About Physician Referral Program

Stefinida Switel (left), Director, Medical Staff Services, hosted an Office Manager luncheon Sept. 26. The purpose was to bring GHCH Medical Staff's office managers up-to-date on the Hospital's Physician Referral Line program. Among the guests were (center) Catherine Flannery-Josephson, R.N., and Chris Hallgren, regional representative from the consulting firm that operates the program.

All office managers were asked to update physician database facts promptly so that accurate physician information can be given to Physician Referral Line callers.

In addition, attendees were advised about the new Physician Referral Line toll-free number that debuted in September—1-888-568-GHCH. ■



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