McGill Global Health Programs

Annual Report 2008

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Introduction

Established from the International Health Office in 2006, the Global Health Programs (GHP) of the McGill Faculty of Medicine is committed to improving the health of people and populations worldwide through educational, clinical, developmental and research programs that link McGill faculty and students with colleagues throughout Canada and the world in collaborative projects. Our mission is to:

- Establish and facilitate international research collaborations to address leading health challenges
- Support the training of health care workers and researchers to combat global health disparities
- Support students and faculty to work with underserved populations and in underserved regions
- Promote long-term capacity building in health and health related sciences in low-resource areas
- Attract outstanding individuals into global health related fields

We strive to achieve these goals working in the local, national and international context. Specific activities undertaken in the past year include creating educational resources, developing opportunities for individuals and groups to come together to advance global health programs and facilitating links between McGill students and faculty with colleagues around the world. This report details the activities undertaken by GHP through June, 2008.

Global Health Education

In the past year, GHP continued to have a leadership role in advancing global health educational activities nationally and locally. Ongoing initiatives such as the annual conference were supplemented with new programs, for example a seminar for 4th year medical students. In addition to direct GHP activities, GHP provided intellectual, financial and/or staff support for a number of faculty and student-led global health educational initiatives. These efforts are described in more detail in the following section.

National Initiatives

Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC)

As Chair of the AFMC's Resource Group on Global Health, Dr. Brewer continues to work with student and faculty representatives from other Canadian medical schools to improve global health educational efforts nationally. Previously, the Group conducted a thorough inventory of

global health resources in Canadian medical schools. The findings from this work were published in Academic Medicine this year.[1] Based on these findings, the Resource Group highlighted the need for uniform guidelines to define minimum core competencies for global health undergraduate medical education. The Group is presently detailing the knowledge and skill sets needed for these core competencies. The long-term goal of these efforts is to establish and integrate standardized global health education criteria into undergraduate medical school curricula.

In 2007-08, the Resource Group collaborated with the Canadian Federation of Medical Students to review national practices for pre-departure training for medical students participating in overseas educational electives. The subsequent report, *Preparing Medical Students for Low-Resource Setting Electives: a Template for National Pre-Departure Training Guidelines*, outlines guidelines for pre-departure training for medical students participating in international electives. The report also identifies resources and standards for pre-departure programs to facilitate information-sharing across Canadian medical schools about best practices for pre-departure training. Standardizing pre-departure training practices in Canadian medical schools will increase the effectiveness and preparedness of all Canadian medical students to engage in international electives. A copy of this report is included in Appendix A.

Dr. Brewer also participated in a think tank aimed at understanding the potential benefits and risks for Canadian medical schools in allowing students to participate in international electives that have not been vetted by the medical schools. This meeting, organized in Ottawa by Dr. Nick Busing, AFMC President, included Dr. Anne McCarthy, Director of Tropical Medicine and International Health Clinic, Ottawa Hospital and Dr. Jeffery Turnball, Chairman of the Department of Medicine, University of Ottawa Medical School.

Local Initiatives

Annual Conference

On May 3rd, 2008, GHP hosted its second annual conference, entitled *Global Health Education: Building a Healthier World*. This conference, which was open to the McGill community as well as individuals from across North America attending the AFMC annual

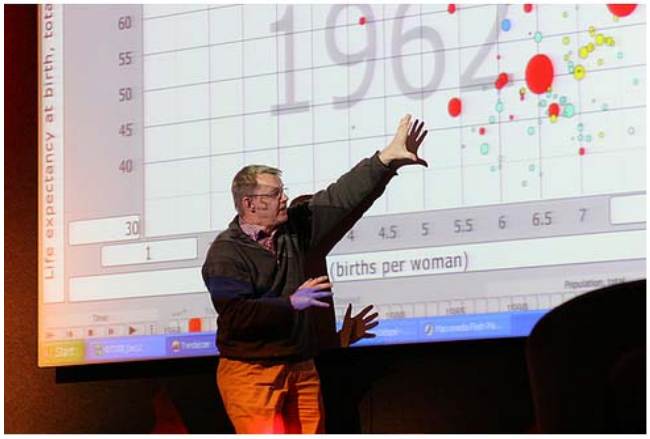
meeting, addressed challenges and opportunities for training students and healthcare professionals interested in global health medical careers.

Keynote presentations were given by Dr. Hans Rosling, Professor of International Health at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm and Ms. Maureen O'Neil, president of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Dr. Rosling is an internationally recognized global health medical educator, with a particular focus on links between health and absolute poverty. At the conference, he presented "*Understanding Global Health Disparities through Innovative Statistics*". Dr. Rosling also is the founder of Gapminder, a non-profit IT company co-owned by the Karolinska Institute. The impressive Gapminder software converts abundant development data into animated graphics to facilitate recognizing trends in development parameters such as poverty or childhood vaccination rates.

Ms. Maureen O'Neil presented on "*Better Governance, Better Health: Research Strategies for Policy and Action*". She has an ongoing role in developing international health-related policy and is committed to human rights and the well-being of people globally.

There were four panels at this year's conference, each addressing a crucial topic in global health education. The panel topics were:

- Teaching Global Health: So What for Canada?
- Developing a Global Health Curriculum: What Students Should Know
- Building Global Health Curricula: Making Use of Existing Resources
- Beyond Undergraduate Medical Education



Dr. Hans Rosling

In addition to thought-provoking presentations on such issues as Canadians' roles as global citizens, technology assisted teaching and global health ethics in practice, speakers and attendees from across Canada and the US participated in lively discussions about opportunities and barriers to developing global health medical education programs. Approximately 160 individuals

participated in this year's meeting. The conference may be viewed by visiting the GHP web site at: http://www.mcgill.ca/globalhealth/conference2008.

Teaching

A number of new global health teaching initiatives were started in the past year, including programs for 1st and 4th year medical students as well as an open elective course for medical and nursing students. Some of these activities are highlighted below.

Medicine and Society: Symposium on Global Health

As part of the Medicine and Society course for 4th year medical students, Dr. Brewer organized a half-day symposium on Global Health. The session introduced the concept of global health and how issues in global health relate to a modern medical career. Specific topics included Global Burden of Disease, Immigrant and Refugee Health, and Research in Low-Resource Settings among others. Prof. Greg Matlashewski and Dr. Christina Greenaway joined Dr. Brewer as speakers in this first ever symposium.

McGill Interdisciplinary Global Health Course

January 2008 saw the implementation of the first McGill Interdisciplinary Global Health Course.[2] Inspired and initiated by McGill medical and nursing students, course organizers collaborated with fellow students and faculty including GHP to explore topics such as: Global Nutrition, Aboriginal Health, Demographic and Epidemiological Transitions, International Law and Global Public Health, Ethics of Humanitarian Work, Maternal and Child Health, and the Impact of Urbanization on Health. The framework for the course was based on guidelines developed by GHP for the AFMC for undergraduate medical education in global health. GHP provided financial support and advice throughout the development of the course; Dr. Brewer also moderated a panel discussion on the relationship between the pharmaceutical industry and healthcare providers.

Additional Teaching Activities

Individual global health topics are increasingly being introduced into the Medical School curriculum through partnerships with course and unit leaders. Examples include:

- Introductory talk on global health added to Physicianship for 1st year medical students
- Presentation on HIV/AIDS in low-resources setting in Back to Basics for 4th year students
- Use of circumcision and HIV prevention articles in Unit 8 of Basis of Medicine course to teach study design principles for 1st year students

E-Learning tools at McGill

The McGill Molson Medical Informatics (MMI) team and GHP continue to work on developing electronic based medical education tools in global health.[3] The first pilot project is an interactive case series of fever in returning travelers designed to be used as a teaching tool for medical students and physicians throughout different stages of their training. Using data from an actual case history, an anonymous case of a patient presenting with Dengue fever has been developed. GHP and MMI are presently working on teaching points and supporting materials to go with the case. This pilot project will be used to highlight ways that advances in information technology may be used to enhance medical learning. Electronic learning tools also have the important advantage of being adaptable for use both at McGill as well as for medical study anywhere in the world.

University Symposium: Something's Gonna Getcha?

Together with the McGill Departments of Geography, Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, the Institute for Health and Social Behavior and others, GHP co-sponsored a symposium with Dr. David Butler Jones, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer and Head of the Public Health Agency of Canada. Dr. Butler Jones' lecture, *Something's Gonna Getcha? Emerging Infectious Diseases, the Environment and Canada's Role in Global Public Health*, was held in March 2008. In addition to the lecture, separate times were arranged for Dr. Butler Jones to meet with small groups of students and faculty to facilitate opportunities for McGill individuals to interact with this important public health official.

Program and Project Support

Over the past year, GHP increasingly has been recognized by the University community as an important source of support and advice regarding international activities. To meet this growing demand, GHP committed substantial faculty and staff time together with financial resources to support global health and international activities undertaken by the University and Medical School faculty, students and staff. Some of these activities were described in the global health education section above. Selected other examples include:

Principal's Office

GHP played an active role in advising Deputy Provost Mendelson and Associate Vice-Principal El-Gamal regarding the Principal's planned trip to the Middle East. Activities included providing information about current McGill health projects in the region, discussions about the itinerary and opportunities for new collaborations.

Vice-Principal for Research and International Relations

On behalf of GHP, Dr. Brewer was involved in a range of activities with the Vice-Principal's Office to advance and support the University's international portfolio over the past year. For example, Dr. Brewer provided feedback on the draft McGill University International Strategic Plan and participated in the follow-up meeting. At Vice-Principal Thérien's invitation Dr. Brewer was the sole University faculty panelist at a G-13 Vice-Principals' meeting on international research issues held at McGill; additional support involved meeting with Vice-Principal Thérien, Dr. Al-Malik of the Saudi Arabian Investment Authority and others to explore opportunities for collaboration between McGill and Saudi Arabian universities and with Associate Vice-Principal Rosen, Assistant Vice-Principal Crocker and others to define opportunities for McGill to work with the Clinton Giustra Sustainable Growth Initiative in Latin America. Dr. Brewer, when requested, also met with visiting dignitaries such as Prof. Dr. Langer, Vice-President, and Mr. Finger, Director, International Office of the University of Freiberg to explore collaborations with McGill.

Working with Deputy Provost Mendelson's Office, GHP developed a memorandum of understanding document to facilitate partnerships between McGill and other faculties of medicine.

Vice-Principal for Health Affairs and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine

GHP organized, coordinated, co-authored and edited the Medical School's response to the World Health Organization's Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property Draft Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property. This work included identifying and assembling a multi-disciplinary team of faculty, residents and students to pull together the final document. Important contributors included Prof. Grey Matlashewski, Prof. Mark Wainberg, Ethan Guillen (student executive director for Universities Allied for Essential Medicine), and Reena Pattani and Carol Skolnik (student leaders of McGill International Health Initiative) among others. A copy of the final report is included in Appendix B.

GHP assisted the Vice Principal, Health Affairs and Dean's Office in exploring international opportunities for the Faculty. For example, Associate Vice-Principal, Health Affairs Dr. Benaroya and Dr. Brewer represented the Faculty of Medicine in a meeting with a delegation from Burkina Faso that included Mme Campaore, First Lady of Burkina Faso, Ambassador Bonkoungou and Prof. Jean Koulidiati, President of the University of Ouagadougou. Dr. Brewer also took part in a meeting of the Associate Deans with Dr. Churchill-Smith to discuss interactions between the McGill University Health Centre International Division and the Faculty of Medicine.

Faculty Support

Humanitarian Studies Initiative for Residents

Drs. Kirsten Johnson and Alison Doucet of the Department of Family Medicine are leading efforts to establish a new, multidisciplinary training program for residents and fellows in the humanitarian response to disaster and refugee crises. Through meetings with the program organizers and providing feedback on draft proposals, Dr. Brewer has been supporting Drs. Johnson's and Doucet's efforts to launch this exciting initiative. Dr. Brewer also has facilitated the scheduling of meetings between the program organizers and the appropriate Associate Deans.

Global Health Diplomacy

Dr. Brewer has represented the Faculty in series of meetings organized by Prof. Laurette Dube of the Desautels Faculty of Management to create new training and research programs in global health diplomacy.

Other examples of faculty support include:

- Meeting with Dr. Tarek Razek, Department of Surgery, to discuss his work to improve trauma and maternal care in Eastern Africa
- Working with Dr. Franco Carli, Department of Anesthesia, to explore opportunities to improve anesthesia training in Rwanda and to create chances for McGill residents and Canadian anesthetists to work in low-resource settings
- Participating in the Pediatrics Department planning meeting on international opportunities
- Meeting with Drs. Gaston Harnois and Marc Laporta of the Department of Psychiatry to explore opportunities for projects between the Faculty and the WHO Collaborating Centre on Mental Health at Douglas Hospital

Student Support

Dr. Brewer frequently advises students on their career objectives, educational paths and elective opportunities. Besides these individual sessions and the educational activities described above, GHP provides faculty, staff and financial support for a growing number of student-based global health activities including:

McGill University: World Health Organization Simulation

In February 2008, GHP co-sponsored the second annual World Health Organization Simulation (McWHO) organized and hosted by the International Federation of Medical Students Association (Quebec Chapter) and the International Relations Students' Association of McGill.[4] This student developed and run program brought together more than 100 cross-disciplinary students from around North America to raise political awareness and involvement in global health issues and to promote interdisciplinary collaboration among future global health professionals. Students from healthcare, political science, and international development represented WHO member nations; together they debated and worked toward a sustainable plan

addressing this year's topic: Migration of Health Workers. The product of the simulation, a Declaration of Principles, was to be formulated and forwarded to the World Health Organization. GHP provided financial support, program advice and help with identifying and inviting speakers.

Global Health Student Presentation Night

Dr. Yuk Chan Ma and Dr. Yuen Kok Chan Prize in Multicultural and International Medicine

On November 14th, GHP co-hosted the annual Student presentation night. The evening was a great success, with presentations by the Osler Medical Aid Foundation Scholars as well as other medical students who had applied for the *Dr. Yuk Chan Ma and Dr. Yuen Kok Chan Prize in Multicultural and International Medicine*. Dr. Alice Chan-Yip was among the attendees along with an awards committee lead by Dr. Brewer. The 2007 *Dr. Yuk Chan Ma and Dr. Yuen Kok Chan Prize in Multicultural and International Medicine* was awarded to Loree Tamanaha for her elective in infectious disease in Mumbai, India. To read selected abstracts of the students' presentations, visit: http://www.mcgill.ca/globalhealth/announcements/. GHP provided financial support for evening, developed the criteria for selecting the *Dr. Yuk Chan Ma and Dr. Yuen Kok Chan Prize in Multicultural and International Medicine*, organized the awards committee and the committee voting and coordinated the awards program and event with the Office of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education.

Osler Medical Aid Foundation Scholarship Program

GHP provides faculty oversight for this scholarship program including meeting with student leaders to improve the quality of the program, reviewing and, when possible interviewing all student applicants to assist the student committee in the selection of the scholarship winners. GHP also has provided financial assistance for this program.

Collaborations

Throughout 2007-2008 GHP worked with the Central Administration, faculty and students to build collaborations between McGill and institutions around the world. As noted above, GHP collaborated closely with the Deputy Provost's Office to review and revise the University's current format for establishing memoranda of understanding with faculties and schools outside of

Canada. GHP also created an MOU form to meet the needs of medical students and residents interested in international placements, and was responsible for ensuring its review and approval by the Central Administration. These efforts on behalf of the entire Faculty were complimented by efforts to assist individual faculty, students and programs. Selected examples include:

Eastern Africa Initiative

GHP initiated the first meeting of members of the Departments of Family Medicine, Surgery, Anesthesia and the School of Nursing to explore opportunities for collaboration in East Africa. Participants included the organizers of the Highland Hope Project in Tanzania, spearheaded by Dr. Doucet of Family Medicine and Ms. Madeleine Buck and Ms. Christina Clausen of the School of Nursing, Dr. Razek of the Department of Surgery, involved with the Canadian Network for International Surgery in Ethiopia and Uganda, and Dr. Carli of Anesthesia, Vice-Chair of the Canadian Anesthesiologists' Society International Education Foundation (CASIEF), working in Rwanda. Each of these individuals and groups are working to create training opportunities and to build local capacity in healthcare. All also share an interest in establishing exchange opportunities. GHP called and facilitated this meeting to explore ways to share expertise and resources.

Academics for Higher Education & Development – Universitaires pour l'éducation supérieure & le développement (AHED-UPESED)

GHP began discussions with AHED-UPESED, a recently established Montreal-based non-governmental organization, to explore opportunities to create partnerships between Canadian universities and institutions of higher education in low-resource settings.[5] AHED-UPESED works to place Canadian university faculty and staff volunteers in temporary positions at internationally located universities to build the institution's capacity and expertise. Current placements are available in Tanzania, Ghana and Indonesia. GHP is looking into how AHED-UPESED might facilitate opportunities for medical school faculty to work abroad.

Fatima Memorial Medical School - Lahore, Pakistan

The World Health Organization estimates that there currently exists a worldwide shortage of 4.3 million doctors, nurses and midwifes. This shortage is most severe in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, and is further exacerbated by a substantial dearth of qualified educational programs and

faculty to train new doctors and nurses, particularly in those countries with the fewest healthcare workers. GHP has established a pilot collaboration with MMI and Fatima Memorial Medical School to develop electronic-based educational tools suitable for use in lower resource settings. Electronic learning tools have numerous important advantages over traditional teaching methods, including being adaptable for use in a variety of settings around the world as well as for individuals at different stages of learning. This collaboration addresses a critical need for curriculum support in a low-resource setting at the same time as creating exciting teaching tools for training McGill students and physicians.

The World Bank

With Dr. Gary Pekeles of the Department of Pediatrics representing McGill University Health Centre, Dr. Brewer has represented the Faculty in discussions with the World Bank to explore opportunities for the Faculty of Medicine and the MUHC to offer support for medical school curriculum development and the provision of healthcare in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Building McGill's Profile in Global Health

GHP is committed to increasing awareness of global health efforts at McGill on campus and abroad. Two articles written by GHP members were published in the February issue of Academic Medicine. The first entitled *Global Health in Canadian Medical Education: Current Practices and Opportunities*, reported results of a Canadian-wide survey on global health education in medical schools conducted by Dr. Brewer and McGill medical students on behalf of the AFMC Resource Group on Global Health.[1] *Beyond Borders: Building Global Health Programs at McGill University Faculty of Medicine* outlines the priorities and progress of Global Health Programs at McGill University.[6]

Some of this work also was presented by Dr. Brewer at the annual meeting of the Global Health Education Consortium (GHEC) in Sacramento this past April. GHEC has been leading efforts at US medical schools to improve and expand global health educational opportunities and resources. GHP has been instrumental in linking Canadian efforts through the AFMC Resource Group on Global Health with the primarily US-based efforts headed by GHEC. Dr. Brewer

recently accepted an invitation to chair a joint GHEC/AFMC Resource Group committee to propose North American guidelines for undergraduate medical education in global health. This important collaboration will position Canada, as well as McGill University, to assume a leadership role in this important North American initiative.

Images that Inspire Photography Competition

In the spring of 2008, GHP organized the inaugural *Images that Inspire* Photography Competition. Students who participated in international electives in the previous year were encouraged to submit photographs they took while participating in international health electives. Each student was allowed to enter up to three photos for consideration in the competition. The winner, *Valerie To*, was chosen for her image of community members gathering water in Benin. Ms. To received a monetary prize of $75. Her photo, along with a selection of other submissions, may be seen on the GHP home page.

Hetin, Benin: This village is lucky to have a potable water source. By sundown, families come fetch their evening supply, and take a drink and refresh themselves alongside. *Photo taken by: Valérie To, McGill Medical Student.*

Serving the McGill Community Online

Faculty projects

For the past two years, GHP has maintained a database of research, educational, clinical and other projects related to global health involving McGill University faculty. Projects are organized and displayed in an interactive and searchable database. Anyone may freely access this comprehensive repository to find project

descriptions and information about McGill health projects around the world. This database is continually expanding and currently contains over 150 projects in 60 countries; it may be accessed through the GHP website, www.mcgill.ca/globalhealth.

Student reports

A new feature of the GHP website begun this year is the creation of a searchable database of student reports on individual international elective experiences. Students participating in international electives are encouraged enter the relevant information and their experiences in this database. Students researching international elective options may filter their search based on region of interest, type of organization, and type of desired elective to learn about the international health activities of other students.

Summary

GHP continues to support and to expand opportunities for faculty and students to learn about and engage in global health activities. GHP also is playing an increasingly important role in the University's and the Faculty of Medicine's efforts to develop their international portfolios. While building on this exciting work, over the coming year GHP plans to expand on its leadership role in establishing global health curriculum guidelines and to further efforts to establish strong linkages with selected international institutions. These networks, together with other ongoing GHP activities, should help to serve as an important foundation for the Faculty of Medicine as it continues its world-leading role as a premier medical school addressing the most essential health issues of our times.

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