Background

Kiribati is a Pacific Island nation with a population of approximately 100,000 of which 50,000 live in the country and 50,000 are diaspora. Tungaru Central Hospital is the country’s tertiary referral hospital and is located on the main island of Tarawa. Tarawa is also the home to most of the country’s population. As of June 2014, the total number of nurses in the country was 387 with 14 senior medical staff and 11 interns. The interns come not only from Kiribati but there are 8 interns from Tuvalu and are participating in the 15 month Kiribati Internship Program. Of the senior medical staff, one is from Tasmania, one from Taiwan and one from Papua New Guinea.

Course participants came from the nursing, medical and pharmacy departments across all departments of TCH.

EPM was run in Kiribati in 2014 (with instructor course) and the feedback from course participants was universally positive. A number of the 2014 participants and instructors attended the 2016 course as a refresher course and to become EPM Instructors at this visit.

The EPM workshop was developed in 2009 to improve pain management worldwide. EPM uses a simple analogy of the unwanted “rat” in the house and the R-A-T acronym as the basis for the management of pain, participants are taught to Recognize, Assess and Treat pain. To date EPM has been translated from English into Vietnamese, Russian, Mongolian, French, Thai and Spanish.

Course Dates

The EPM program was run from Monday 8th to Wednesday 10th February. The EPM program was run in two halves to fit with the flight schedules. The first half in the afternoon of Monday 8th February and the second half on Tuesday morning 9th February. This was followed by the EPM Instructor program, for 7 local Instructors. On Wednesday 10th February, the day long EPM workshop was run at two sites (Tungaru Central Hospital, Tarawa and Betio Hospital). These two courses were successfully taught by the new instructors, with minimal assistance from the Australian team.

Lead Instructors

Dr Roger Goucke
Pain Medicine Physician and Anaesthetist
Sir Charles Gardner Hospital, Perth WA
Email  Roger.Goucke@gmail.com

Mr Maurice Hennessey  
Learning & Development Facilitator  
Australia and New Zealand College of Anesthetists  
ANZCA House, Melbourne Australia  
Email  mhennessy@anzca.edu.au

Dr Emily Stimson  
Anaesthetist Hunter New England Area Health Service, Newcastle Australia  
Email  Emily.Stimson@gmail.com

Course Participants

Workshop One 23 participants:  Doctors: 12,  Nurses: 11

Instructor Course: Doctors: 4, Nurses: 3

Dr Tekeua Urium  
Dr Hilda Schutz  
Dr Tanebu Tong  
Dr Thomas Russell  
Nurses: Teiraoi Bio  
William Kaono  
Nakau Tio

Workshop Two Tungaru Central Hospital 26 participants:  Doctors: 1 (Director of the Hospital), Interns: 2,  Nurses: 20, Pharmacists: 3,

Workshop Two Betio Hospital: 14 participants (all Nurses)

Venue and Catering

The workshops at TCH were held in the Taiwan Medical Program Building. The desks were arranged in rows, similar to a lecture theatre, with chairs being moved into small circles for group discussions. The air-conditioning and fans were much appreciated.

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea were kindly provided by the Ministry of Health and Medical Services Tarawa.

Teaching Materials

The standard EPM Workshop slides were utilized for all courses. The workshop manuals were printed in Tarawa with the financial assistance of the Ministry of Health.

Assessment

A pre and post test was completed by participants at all the workshops. The test comprises 25 True / False questions to assess learning acquired during the day. Scores improved across the day. See appendix
Feedback
Feedback forms were completed by all participants at the end of each course and this feedback was universally very positive. Learning points that reappeared across feedback forms included:

1. ‘I now have the RAT framework to assess pain’
2. Know I know I can give more than one pain medication at once
3.

Other Activities

1. Hospital Tour and Ward Round Tungaru Central Hospital
   a. All three Australian representatives spent the morning after the EPM courses at a ward round through Emergency Department, Medical, Surgical, Paediatric and O&G wards at TCH. This was kindly facilitated by Dr Tekeua.

2. Taiwanese Technical Mission
   a. Dr Goucke and Dr Stimson also spent an afternoon at the Taiwanese Research Farm after a kind introduction from Dr Peidra Niu, an Emergency Medicine Specialist from Taiwan currently working at TCH. This was a fascinating (& delicious!) tour of an organic permaculture farm run by the Taiwanese Government for the past 14 years. We particularly enjoyed the interesting discussions with the team’s nutritionist about research into dietary changes and health indices in Kiribati’s children.

3. Tour of the new Rehabilitation Unit and Prosthetic Department
   a. Opened in 2015, the unit is staffed by 3 physiotherapists, 2 physio assistants and 2 prosthetic technicians.
   b. TCH does 2-3 amputations / week leading to 100 – 150 new amputees each year. Most of these patients require an amputation secondary to their diabetes and most amputations are of a lower limb.
   c. Due to the geography of Kiribati, conventional wheelchairs are not appropriate therefore, wheelchairs are assembled on site with ‘off road’ components.
   d. The Head Physiotherapist strongly requests that his department be able to attend future EPM courses. Unfortunately they were not aware of this course but would like to participate in the future.

4. Lifebox Equipment Review
   a. During our hospital tour, discussion turned to a number of Lifebox oxygen saturation probes that were no longer charging. At the request of the Engineering Department & Medical staff 4 Lifeboxes were taken to Australia by Dr Stimson, for investigation, feedback to Lifebox International & replacement.
Dr Tekeua will be included in email communication regarding the probes.

Success of Relevance of Workshops

The workshops were a great success with participants reporting that they felt they understood pain better than when they arrived, that they enjoyed the interactive sessions and that they have left with simple action points to influence their management of pain in their patients.

Having participants come from a range of departments across the hospital as well as from a range of professional craft groups (nursing, medical and pharmacy) has ensured that the ideas of EPM have wide ranging impact into various parts of the Kiribati health system.

The inclusion of 8 interns from Tuvalu in the program also expands the impact of EPM to other Pacific Island nations. These participants indicated in their feedback forms that they felt they would be able to return to Tuvalu with improved skills for assessing and managing their patient’s pain.

Recommendations for EPM Kiribati

1. Invite members of the Physiotherapy Department to participate in future EPM courses in Kiribati. The Head of Department of Physiotherapy is especially keen to participate and to have his staff (physiotherapists and physiotherapy assistants) increase their knowledge in pain management, especially the non-drug treatments they can use to assist patients.

2. Run annual or biannual EPM Workshops at locations throughout Kiribati (initially TCH and Betio Hospital)
   a. In 2014 the EPM report recommended running 6 monthly EPM courses at TCH, however this is a challenge due to logistics, cost, staff numbers and workload. We feel that biannual courses are more realistic.
   b. To include interns from the Kiribati Internship Program as participants in the EPM programs. Currently the KIP program includes 8 interns from Tuvalu and in the future may include interns from other Pacific Island Nations.

3. Create a Pain Management Protocol to be used in clinics and hospitals throughout Kiribati.
   a. Local EPM team to meet and use EPM principles to write a Pain Management Protocol for Kiribati, and to have this include EPM Principles (Recognize – Assess – Treat) and both Non-Drug and Drug therapies. A provisional program that can be adapted is at the back of the EPM manual.
   b. Protocol to be distributed to the Ministry of Health & Medical Science (MHMS), Nursing staff, Pharmacy, Drug Committee & Heads of Department for feedback and review
c. Incorporate feedback and implement Pain Protocol.

4. Increase awareness of Pain Management at Turunga Central Hospital with public health education posters declaring TCH to be a ‘Pain Free Hospital’.
   a. Local EPM team to implement poster design and production for distribution around hospital. As per workshop discussions.

5. To include the EPM course in the curriculum of the Kiribati Nursing School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful for the support of Dr Burentau Teriboriki, Director of Hospital Services TCH.

Thanks to the Taiwan Medical Program for the use of their seminar room for three days.

Thanks to Dr Alani and Dr Tekeua for coordinating the EPM Program at Tungaru Central Hospital & Betio Hospital.

We are grateful to the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and to the Arnott Foundation, for supporting logistics and travel costs of the Australian Instructors.
Appendix 1

Pre post test Day 1 (8 and 9 February 2016)

Feedback Tungaru group 9 February 2016
Betio Hospital 10 February 2016

**Kiribati 10.2.2016 Betio (N=14)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Pre</th>
<th>Mean Post</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of correct answers (N=25)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Improvement Kiribati 10.2.2016 Betio**

**Feedback Betio Group 10 February 2016**

- **EPM will be useful in my daily work:**
  - Strongly disagree: 0%
  - Disagree: 13%
  - Not sure: 8%
  - Agree: 85%
  - Strongly agree: 92%

- **EPM has improved my understanding of pain:**
  - Strongly disagree: 0%
  - Disagree: 25%
  - Not sure: 8%
  - Agree: 25%
  - Strongly agree: 100%

- **I will now be able to assess pain better:**
  - Strongly disagree: 0%
  - Disagree: 25%
  - Not sure: 8%
  - Agree: 25%
  - Strongly agree: 100%

- **I will now be more willing to prescribe or give opioid:**
  - Strongly disagree: 0%
  - Disagree: 25%
  - Not sure: 8%
  - Agree: 25%
  - Strongly agree: 100%

- **The training today was effective:**
  - Strongly disagree: 0%
  - Disagree: 25%
  - Not sure: 8%
  - Agree: 25%
  - Strongly agree: 100%
Pre post Test Tungara group 10 February 2016

Attendees
Day 1 run on Monday 8\textsuperscript{th} and Tuesday 9\textsuperscript{th} February 2016
Day 2 run at Turunga on 10 February with new instructors

Course participants
New Instructor lecturing

New instructor with a group discussion

New instructors with group case discussion