Traveling Pain School – EPM 2014-June 2016

Traveling Pain School is a voluntary organisation of physicians from various disciplines, involved in pain education in India. 250,000 healthcare professionals graduate every year in India, which is spread over an area of 3 million square kilometres. Through the EPM workshops, we aim to empower healthcare professionals with the requisite skills and knowledge to manage pain, especially in resource-poor settings. As a low-cost model of pain education, run by physician volunteers, it has the potential to make a marked difference in the way pain is treated in India.

- Typically, two half-day EPM-Lite workshops are conducted in a given day and the average attendance in the workshops was 60/workshop i.e. 120 students/day.
- 10,000+ healthcare professionals have attended the EPM workshops since its start in 2014.
- More than 80 EPM-Lite half-day workshops and 7 train-the-trainers workshops have been held across India.
- India now has 125 trainers, which has resulted in a 33% reduction of the cost per student per workshop, from $ 12.50 when we started to $ 8.30 now. This has also resulted in reaching out to 2.4x more healthcare professionals than when we started.
- We now have a presence in 10 states (out of 29 states and 7 Union Territories) that has a combined population of 760 million and spread over 1.5 million sq.km.

Our challenges include a) Inertia, on occasions, among the trainers as well as the student workshop organizers b) Bureaucratic tangles c) Requests to conduct it during weekdays, whereas the faculty was available only on weekend d) Insistence that the core group should teach and not the new trainers due to perceived ‘better quality’ e) Keeping up the motivation of faculty and f) Loss of quality faculty due to personal circumstances. Despite the challenges, the project has the potential to be scaled up to improve availability, accessibility and affordability of pain care in India.