

PEDIATRIC LIFE SUPPORT TRAINING WILL SAVE LIVES

Puerto Escondido

Excerpt from report by Kim McClennan.



This February a small group of CFHI staff and volunteers traveled to Puerto Escondido, to teach a 3-day advanced pediatric lifesaving course to Mexican physicians and medical students. The group was headed by Ewen Wang M.D., an associate professor of pediatric emergency medicine at Stanford and Evaleen Jones M.D., founder and medical director of CFHI. The group also included Eunice Mata M.D., a clinical instructor of general Internal medicine at Stanford University, and Rene Hsia, a resident M.D. in emergency medicine. In 2005, Dr. Wang had made a site visit to Puerto Escondido where CFHI students work and study with local health professionals.

When the local CFHI Medical Director was asked by Dr. Wang what was needed most for the local community, she was told that they would benefit a great deal from learning advanced lifesaving skills: **what to do in cases where children and infants are brought to the local centers and need immediate and skillful attention to keep them alive.** Less than a year later, Dr. Wang, Dr. Jones and CFHI staff headed by Nick Penco, set out to put together an **appropriate course with teaching materials in Spanish** and donated medical supplies for teaching.



The 25 students in the course included 3 physicians and 22 medical students primarily in their fourth or fifth year of study. They included both men and women ranging in age from 20 to 30 years of age who lived primarily in rural communities in the state of Oaxaca in the southern part of Mexico. Due to the scarcity of trained advanced lifesaving instructors, four of the course participants were given additional training to become instructors themselves in the lifesaving techniques.

The essential course material was based on pediatric resuscitation and trauma assessment. Using newborn and child-sized mannequins, basic resuscitation (CPR) methods were taught and advanced skills needed to recognize respiratory failure, shock or cardiac arrest. **Many of the students had never used advanced lifesaving equipment such as an oxygen bag-mask device, intubation devices or a defibrillator.**

One of the students, Midori, was an epidemiologist and masters of public health (MPH) student who worked in distant, rural areas and often felt frustrated because she knew there were cases where children experience respiratory arrest due to pesticide poisoning. She now felt she could help because she had learned the fundamental techniques for saving lives that would make the difference between life and death.

More children will thrive and grow up to be part of a better world where everyone gains if everyone is given a chance to learn and be independent. "I believe this training will truly save lives," reports Nick Penco.