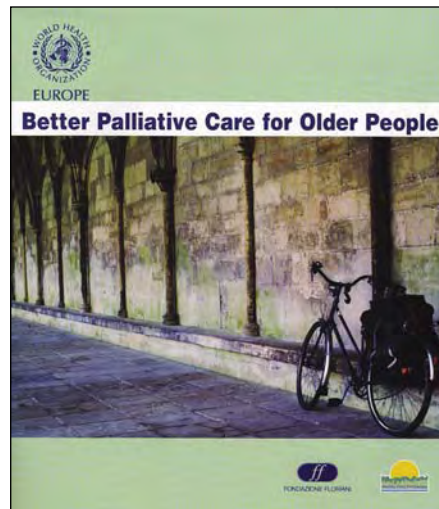
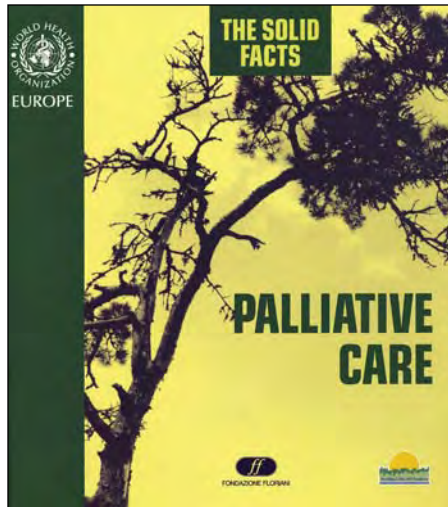


THE INTERNATIONAL PALLIATIVE CARE INITIATIVE: CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE FORMER SOVIET UNION



IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE and the former Soviet Union, public health experts are increasingly aware that an aging population, a growing incidence of cancer, and an emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic will create enormous medical, social, and economic challenges, and that the quality of care for patients and families must be seen as an international public health issue.

In January 2000, the Open Society Institute announced a \$500,000 per year initiative to enhance hospice and palliative care in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU). A joint initiative of OSI's Network Public Health Program and US Program's Project on Death in America, the Palliative Care Initiative for CEE and FSU provides matching funds to National Soros Foundations for palliative care development. Additional non-matching funds support palliative care initiatives outside the Soros Foundation Network. Funding is used to support governmental and professional

organizations, individuals, and foundations to expand the capacity of programs and activities in this region to improve care of the dying.

The goal of the Palliative Care Initiative for CEE and FSU is to improve end-of-life care for patients and families with a special focus on vulnerable populations including the elderly, children, and patients with cancer or HIV/AIDS.

The initiative has four objectives:

- to increase public awareness about end-of-life care issues;
- to provide palliative care education to healthcare professionals and support the integration of palliative care into medical, social work, and nursing school curricula;
- to make essential drugs for pain and symptom management easily available, and
- to integrate palliative care into national healthcare plans, policies, and systems of care.

The initiative has made over 100 grants in the region to individuals, non-governmental organizations, national and international professional associations, and the World Health Organization. The main funding strategy of the initiative has been to map the wide range of existing palliative care services in the region and to support their capacity for development and sustainability. The initiative has also supported efforts to improve governmental health policies that affect the delivery of palliative care services.

Funding examples include:

- Establishing seven Palliative Care Resource Training Centers to support professional and public education, reduce barriers to opioid availability, and integrate palliative care into national health care policies and systems.
- Sponsoring national and regional education programs for physicians, nurses, social workers, clergy, and health care policymakers in the region.
- Awarding scholarships for health professionals to train at internationally

recognized centers of excellence in palliative care.

- Supporting translation and distribution of existing palliative care texts and educational materials.
- Supporting research to improve national drug availability laws and regulations in order to guarantee the medical use and availability of opioid analgesics and other essential medications for pain and symptom management.
- Supporting an International Observatory on End of Life Care that provides country reports on palliative care development for researchers, health policymakers, and funders. (www.eolc-observatory.net)

The Palliative Care Initiative serves as a resource to establish an international network of individuals and organizations committed to improving care for patients with life-limiting illness and their families. In the coming years, the initiative will expand its reach to additional countries, and previously-funded programs will continue to receive technical assistance.

THE INTERNATIONAL PALLIATIVE CARE INITIATIVE: SOUTH AFRICA



Newly orphaned child in the KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa, where the HIV infection rate in the ante-natal clinics is at 38 percent.

THE QUALITY OF LIFE of hundreds of thousands of HIV/AIDS patients and their families could be dramatically improved just by making existing knowledge of pain management, symptom control, and psychosocial support widely accessible to community-based HIV/AIDS programs. These programs provide a range of essential services, including HIV testing, counseling, palliative care, social support, food, clothing, housing, orphan care, daycare centers, and income-generating initiatives.

In 2002, the Open Society Institute expanded its International Palliative Care Initiative to South Africa with a \$1 million, three-year matching funds initiative. This initiative is designed to serve as a catalyst to advance programs in palliative care education, training, and service delivery; and to advocate for their full integration into national HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment programs.

The Palliative Care Initiative in South

Africa has identified three non-governmental organizations that focus on professional and public education and have expertise, experience, and proven community organizing skills. These groups are steadily developing the capacity to advocate for more integrated community-based palliative care programs for HIV/AIDS. Professional and public education is a major focus of these programs in order to help build a workforce of community health volunteers and professionals who treat and care for patients with HIV/AIDS. The community-based, non-governmental organizations are far ahead of the government in addressing the palliative care needs of dying HIV/AIDS patients and their families, especially at a grassroots level.

The Palliative Care Initiative in South Africa currently provides funding to three organizations. In 2002, The Open Society Institute granted \$300,000 to support these programs and secured an additional \$240,000 in matching funds through an unrestricted one-year grant from Pfizer, USA. A total of \$540,000 was distributed among these organizations in 2002. The Palliative Care Initiative in South Africa will continue through 2004.

Foundation for Medical Education for South African Blacks (MESAB)

- Uses its healthcare professional training network to advance palliative care.
- Offers a model curriculum for community home care workers, doctors, and nurses in collaboration with the South Coast Hospice Training Program.
- Supports the ACTS Center in Mpumalanga to develop four short stay palliative care units in rural areas, which serve as local training centers for community health workers.
- Advocates for palliative care education in medical and nursing schools and graduate medical training programs.

Hospice Association of South Africa (HASA)

- Offers a hospice mentorship program. Five hospices serve as resource training centers for community caregivers, families, and health professionals. Each of the five hospices mentors three smaller hospice programs in order to increase the availability of palliative care

services for patients and families, and to integrate HIV/AIDS care into community healthcare models based on the HASA/government guidelines.

- Increases the availability of palliative care services and helps integrate HIV/AIDS care into community healthcare models based on the HASA/government guidelines.

Foundation for Hospices in Sub-Saharan Africa (FHSSA)

- Operates the Hospice-to-Hospice Partnership Program, which links South African and American hospice and palliative care programs to share information, advice, and moral support. There are currently 50 hospices in the United States and Africa participating in this program.
- Supports international advocacy efforts with other foundations and non-governmental organizations to develop and sustain palliative care initiatives in South Africa.