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APHCO

News

NEWSLETTER OF THE ASIA PACIFIC HEALTH CO-OPERATIVE ORGANISATION

1998



Participants at the inaugural meeting of APHCO in Kathmandu, Nepal, August 1997

Health Cooperative Movement spreading all over the Region

The APHCO (Asia Pacific Health Co-operative organisation) had its Inaugural Meeting in August, 1997, Kathmandu, Nepal. APHCO is a voluntary association of Health Cooperatives in the region.

There are many Health Cooperatives in the world, also in our region - Asia and the Pacific, and these have contributed a lot to community in their respective countries. Through our various health related activities, we recognised the necessity of the regional net-work or collaboration beyond country borders. After very constructive discussions among some health Cooperatives in the region, finally we established APHCO. So far 5 countries have joined APHCO, namely, India, Japan, Korea, Nepal and Sri Lanka. All member organisations have been making great effort in order to maintain and promote members' health and good quality of life with their concern for community, and it should be addressed

that it is very meaningful to form the network among such positive organisations. We shall encourage each other and exchange our experience to strengthen and consolidate the Health Cooperative Movement in the region.

Although there are many Health Cooperatives in Asia and the Pacific, there are still large sections of the community who have been neglected in terms of health care or promotion. We assume that we should play an important role to improve people's health and disseminate information of our activities. In the same line with it, we would like to work together with other related organisations like WHO to achieve healthy community and work out crucial issues we have faced. APHCO also, of course, do cooperate with IHCO (International Health Cooperative Organisation) which is the international body of the Health Cooperatives.

What can we do?

by Dr. Shoji Kato, Chairperson-APHCO

What can APHCO do for our members?

There are two things in my mind. One is to provide opportunities to exchange experiences and discussions to deepen mutual understanding of the Principles of Cooperatives. The 'ICA Statement on Cooperative Identity' was adopted at the ICA Congress in Manchester, 1995. This should be discussed not only when cooperatives are surrounded by favourable situations but also when having a tough time.

Another one is to promote concrete mutual support and collaboration among them. For example, Health Co-operative Association of JCCU has been receiving a doctor from Nepal for a two-year training on cardiology and there is also a trainee dentist from Mongolia. Other training programmes with cooperative hospitals in Sri Lanka and India for paramedical staff are also under discussion.

We are also supposed to have an exchange programme for organisational activity with Korea. Recycling of used medical equipment is one of the possible collaboration in the future.

The 5th IHCO Board Meeting was held in Spain in April 1998 and discussed about how the regional structure should be including African continent. This issue has led the membership to be more open and the Rules and Subscription to be revised based on the principles in a more faithful way.

Collaboration with WHO for health promotion and a joint programme of the International Year of Older Persons were also discussed.

I wish the activity of IHCO and APHCO will be settled within the century.



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Introduction of Board Members of APHCO

Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe, President of the National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka, a veteran Cooperator from Sri Lanka with more than 30 years experience in all fields of the Cooperative Movement in Sri Lanka is the Vice-President of APHCO. Presently he is the President of the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka which is the umbrella organisation of the Cooperatives in Sri Lanka. Through his affiliation with the grass root societies in the countries and the world cooperative movement - the International Cooperative Alliance. He has been able to coordinate with everybody concerned in the cooperative sector nationally as well as internationally. He represents the apex level in Sri Lanka in the Consumer, Agriculture, Insurance Company, Thrift & Credit and Health Cooperative fields, and is also the President of the newly formed Cooperative Insurance Company Ltd.

Shushrusha Citizens Cooperative Hospitals Ltd.

by Dr. Vijay Deshmukh



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Shushrusha Citizens Cooperative Hospital Ltd., Bombay, India was the first cooperative hospital in the country created by the Community as an instrument of services. It is a users cooperative where citizens and doctors are committed for providing high quality health care as a Right without exploitation and with self participation.

Shushrusha belongs to the community. There are more than 8,000 members who participate in investment, use of medical facility and also hospital administration. It has a full fledged 140 bedded hospital located in a residential area of Shivaji Park, and also has a Maternity and Child Care Unit at Vikhroli an Industrial suburb of Mumbai. Dr. Vijay Deshmukh, Consultant Surgeon, Hon. Associate Pro-fessor in Surgery and Vice-President of College of

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He has been participating in all the meetings of Asia Pacific Health Cooperatives held at Colombo, Sri Lanka 1994 and Mumbai, India 1996. He is a Board Member of APHCO and has undertaken a hard task of getting all the cooperatives in India under one roof. He firmly believes that it is cost effective and sophisticated to create an atmosphere and philosophy of cooperation in Health Care. This philosophy allows creation of shared support structure in a real climate of trust and mutual advantage.

Action Plan

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2. Exchange and Solidarity

The APHCO actively encourages activities for exchange and solidarity among member organisations. It may organise a forum for discussion and exchange of experiences, if necessary. At the same time it actively promotes exchange with other organisations of the ICA and health cooperatives of other regions.

Health cooperatives participating in the APHCO have various requirements and desires under their own circumstances. The activities of the APHCO cover many things such as exchange of not only experiences but also human development, educational training, medical technology, health activities, improvement of skills for management of facilities, and mutual assistance.

3. Research and Study

The APHCO should grasp actual conditions of known and unknown health cooperatives in the Asia-pacific region, conducting more accurate research. And it encourages the new health cooperatives to participate in the APHCO.

The organisational form and actual activities of health cooperatives vary according to their social situations and historical backgrounds. The APHCO must have accurate knowledge about them, conducting research and study. In addition it must define its principles in the role and activities of health cooperatives.

4. Activity of Working Groups by Subject

5. Publicity Work

The APHCO has to always inform member organisations of their activities and of international information including other regional information. For this purpose necessary information shall be channeled to the APHCO, and with the information the APHCO publishes newsletters. It also propagates outside and inside of the ICA its activities, taking advantage of various opportunities.

6. Organisational Activity

The APHCO encourages non-member health cooperatives to participate in the APHCO and, on the establishment of new health cooperatives in other areas or countries, give active advice and support to them.

It is advisable for countries or states which have more than two health cooperatives to organise either confederations or liaison conferences to promote further activities as well as to participate in the APHCO.

7. Collaboration with other Organizations

The APHCO always collaborates actively with the affiliated organisations to the ICA and other non-governmental organisations. It may collaborate with some governments which understand the activities of health cooperatives.

Attendants at Shangri-La Hotel, Katmandu, Nepal on 26 August 1997

1. Hon. Dr. Bharat Pradhan – Minister of State of Health, Nepal Chief Guest
2. Dr. Rita Thapa – World Health Organisation Regional Office
3. Mr. E. Narayanan, Mr. T. Haridasan – Tellicherry Coop Hospital, India
4. Mr. Ramesh D. Medhekar, Dr. Vijay Deshmukh, Dr. G.V. Acharya – Shushrusha Citizens Coop Hospital, India.
5. Dr. Toshio Ogino, Dr. Yasuyuki Takahashi, Ms. Takako Yanaga, Mr. Takashi Yoshioka, Ms. Yoko Miyoshi – Medical Coop Committee of JCCU, Japan.
6. Hon. Deepak Prakash Baskota – M.P. Chairman, National Coop Federation of Nepal.
7. Mr. Suman Shrestha, Dr. Saroj Dhital – Public Health Concern Trust, Nepal.
8. Dr. Saniae Lee, Ms. Bok Hee Park, Ms. Lee Mihee – Ansung Medical Cooperative, S. Korea
9. Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe – National Coop Council of Sri Lanka
10. Mr. Robby Tulus, Mr. W.U. Herath, Mr. A.K. Taneja – International Cooperative Alliance, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

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NCC organises National Seminar on Health Co-operatives



Dr. Kato visited a co-operative hospital in Sri Lanka on the occasion of the NCC National Seminar.

The National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka organised a national seminar on Health Co-operative Services on 13th July, 1998 in Colombo.

More than 30 participants from various Co-operative Hospitals gathered together and discussed issues which they have been facing.

There are a number of Co-operative hospitals in Sri Lanka, but they did not have any network or a national level federation.

During the discussion the participants of the Seminar came to the conclusion that they needed a national network or federation, and organised a working committee in order to help establish a national federation.

Dr. Shoji Kato, chairperson of APHCO and IHCO joined the Seminar and gave a lot of advice and expressed fraternal greetings on behalf of Japanese Health Co-op as well as APHCO and IHCO.

Ms. Yukiko Yamamoto, Gender Advisor, represented the ICA Regional Office at the seminar.



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Participants pose for a photograph at the APHCO Board meeting in Kerala, India. (Report on page 2)

Healthcare Co-operatives have been providing a silent but effective healthcare for low-income groups of communities in many countries around the world. The history of healthcare co-operative in Asia and the Pacific goes back to the early part of the 20th century. Japan was the first country to organize a healthcare co-operative in 1919, followed by Sri Lanka in 1932 and India in 1949.

Asia Pacific Health Co-operative Organization (APHCO) is the representative organization of health co-operative in the Asia Pacific Region at the international level. It had its Inaugural meeting at Kathmandu, Nepal in August 1997. Its objective is to promote health and medical co-operatives in the Asia-Pacific Region. APHCO is a voluntary association of Health Co-operatives in Asia and the Pacific region. Currently APHCO's members include medical

health co-operatives from Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, India, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

APHCO held its Board Meetings six times until now after its establishment in August 1997. APHCO members, usually in its meetings discuss Action Plans, Exchange Programmes, experiences, study and learn new and cheaper technology in the field of health-care. Also, APHCO held its 2nd Regional Seminar in October 1999 in Malaysia, in collaboration with Malaysian Doctors' Co-operative Society Limited (KDM) and ANGKASA (National Cooperative Organization of Malaysia). The 2nd Regional Seminar had exchanged and shared experiences and ideas on co-operative health, including its policies, programmes, financing and co-ordination mechanisms. Now, APHCO is planning to hold the 3rd Regional Seminar in the year 2002.

Board of Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organisation met in Kerala, India

The Board of Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organisation (APHCO) met at the Co-operative Hospital, Thalassery, Kerala (Southern India) during 27-28 March, 2000.

Dr. Shoji Kato, Chairperson of APHCO, presided over the meeting which was participated by 12 delegates, both members and observers.

The meeting opened with a welcome address by E. Marayanan, President of Tellicherry Co-operative Hospital. Dr. Kato, the Chair of APHCO, said that he attended and International Conference of NHOs on Public Health

in Seoul, Korea. He mentioned that health co-operatives are forced to compete with the private enterprises and are facing financial difficulties and various other obstacles. In order to survive, the health co-operatives should improve the quality of services provided by them.

Dr. Kato also reported that the Health Co-operative Association of Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union held a joint seminar with the Health Co-operative in Korea.

Members suggested that second-hand medical appliances/equipment used by developed countries could be offered to developing countries at nominal costs.

APHCO Board meets in Singapore

The board of Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organization (APHCO) met in Singapore from 19 to 21 July 2001.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Vijay Deshmukh, in the absence of Dr. Shoji Kato Chairperson of the APHCO. Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe, President of National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka, informed the participants that his organization had prepared for the Asia Pacific Health Co-op Seminar in conjunction with the board meeting in Sri Lanka. Dr. Deshmukh sincerely apologized to Mr. Samarasinghe for the postponement of the meeting and the shifting of the venue.

The meeting felt that it is necessary to coordinate the relationship between the IHCO (International Health Co-operative Organization) and APHCO, especially in view of the fact that Dr. Shoji Kato is the Chair of both IHCO and APHCO.

It was therefore suggested that APHCO members participate in the IHCO general meeting in Seoul during October as observers and exchange ideas with IHCO members, to consider joining IHCO.

Dr. Bharat Pradhan reported that Phect-Nepal has developed a community hospital with the help of Dr. Yasuyuki Takahashi and JCCU. The meeting also discussed the used medical appliances exchange programme. Dr. Yasuyuki Takahashi reported that JCCU has been providing their used medical appliances to Mongolia.

APHCO members who require used medical appliances could provide a list of their requirements to the secretariat for circulation to its members.

The APHCO next General Assembly will be held in Seoul in October in conjunction with IHCO General Assembly and ICA General Assembly.

The committee felt that during the ICA/IHCO General



Participants pose for a photograph at the Board meeting in Singapore

Assembly in Seoul, Korea, APHCO should be given some time to present and discuss its relationship with IHCO.

Reports from member-countries

1. Co-operative Health Development in Malaysia since October 1999

The holding of the 3rd APHCO Board Meeting and General Assembly in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, as well as a Regional Seminar on Co-operative Health Care in October 1999 has stimulated interest among the co-operative sector to develop co-operative health care in the country. Department of Co-operative Development (JPK) in April 2000, sent a team including KDM to study Health Co-operatives and National Health Financing in Japan and Taiwan. Following the Japan/Taiwan visit, KDM collaborated with JPK and

the National Co-operative Organization of Malaysia (ANGKASA) in preparing JPK's draft paper on Co-operative Health Care, which includes: -

- (a) General guidelines on local level collaboration in health care among provider and consumer co-operatives;
- (b) Setting up a secondary health co-operative and a co-operative hospital.

Following feed-back at a National Seminar organized by JPK in November 2000, the matter was referred to a Study Group, which submitted its report to JPK in June 2001.

The Study Group report also included reference to the Brazilian Model of Health Co-operative, brought back by a senior KDM Board member who had been sent to Brazil in December 2000 to study the set-up of Brazilian doctors' co-operative (UNIMED), while attending an IHCO Conference in Rio de Janeiro. The latest development is that JPK is in the process of preparing a Master Plan on Co-operative Health Care, for submission to Government. In the meantime, in late 2000, the Penang Branch of KDM had initiated a pilot Community Health Project, involving several branches of the Penang Community Relations Organization (Rukun Tetangga), to stimulate Han-type healthy lifestyle activities among the members.

The involvement of local community resources (such as Village Development Committees, Rukun Tetangga, Residents' Associations, etc.) has the potential of setting up community-based Health Co-operatives. With support, the Penang experience may be adapted to different situations in other parts of the country.



A view of the participants at the APHCO Seminar in Malaysia

2. Establishment of Public Health Concern Coop. Society Ltd. NEPAL (Phec-Coop)

Phect-NEPAL is a Non Government Organization (NGO) in Nepal. Phect-NEPAL has been working with APHCO since its inception. APHCO has been supporting Phect-NEPAL, also has been requesting it to become a Co-operative Society. But in spite of its involvement in the health co-

operative movement, the existing regulations regarding cooperatives did not allow Phect-NEPAL to be registered directly into a cooperative. Being sensitive to the issues raised in the last few meetings of the APHCO board and having the responsibility towards the objectives and goals of APHCO, Phect-NEPAL has finally made a breakthrough by establishing Public Health Concern Cooperative Society Ltd; NEPAL (Phec-COOP). This new cooperative should be understood as the cooperative version of the mother organization, phect-NEPAL. Besides the formation of this central cooperative, a number of health cooperatives have been formed with phect-NEPAL initiation and involvement at different parts of the country. These cooperatives range from health cooperatives formed in association with very strong organizations with huge membership to small health cooperatives formed in a new area. Thus, a network of health cooperative is already taking shape with the Phec-COOP at its center. Frequent meeting between the members of this network are being held and relevant issues discussed.

3. Health Co-op Association (HCA) of JCCU

HCA is organizing the exchange programs with the health care and medical cooperatives in Asia. Two trainees from a South Korea's Health Co-op visited Japan in July 2000 to learn more about co-operative management and members' participation. They took part in the study sessions with Japanese co-ops' board members and staff.

HCA visited Mongolia's dental co-op "Enerel" last September. Under the social circumstances in which medical services, including dental sector, has been rapidly committed to private hands since 1990, "Enerel" has been trying to provide dental care of high quality at low cost.

During the visit, the future exchange plans, especially on the education and training of young staff, were discussed. HCA has already arranged the second-hand dental equipment for "Enerel" and is now collecting funds by selling the tooth-brushes to co-op members to develop further exchange programs. Further, in November 2000, Higashi-Osaka Co-op. and HCA jointly organized a study tour to Nepal. Since 1999 HCA has been raising funds for supporting PHECT building a new hospital in Kirtipur, which is near Kathmandu. Japanese Health Co-op Association adopted its 3rd midterm plan (called "21 Plan") at the Annual Congress on May 14. This plan takes our goal as the contribution to healthier and more sustainable society through 2 main business activities; nursing care service for the elderly, and support program for the childcare.

To achieve this goal, health co-ops will need to strengthen partnership with various people and groups, including local governments, NGOs and other types of Co-operatives. Focusing on medical trend, establishment of risk management system and staff education program will be the most important and urgent matters. For more instructive staff education, we are discussing providing young medical staff and student with an opportunity to study abroad.

Action Plan of APHCO

APHCO is planning to undertake the following programmes:

1. Asia Pacific Regional Health/medical Cooperative seminar;
2. Staff training program;
3. Exchange program of the used medical appliances;

The APHCO is also planning to discuss some fund raising programs. In case APHCO implements these plans, some finance may need to be contributed by members.

List of APHCO Members

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4. Activity of Working Groups by Subject

5. Publicity Work

The APHCO has to always inform member organisations of their activities and of international information including other regional information. For this purpose necessary information shall be channeled to the APHCO, and with the information the APHCO publishes newsletters. It also propagates outside and inside of the ICA its activities, taking advantage of various opportunities.

6. Organisational Activity

The APHCO encourages non-member health cooperatives to participate in the APHCO and, on the establishment of new health cooperatives in other areas or countries, give active advice and support to them.

It is advisable for countries or states which have more than two health cooperatives to organise either confederations or liaison conferences to promote further activities as well as to participate in the APHCO.

7. Collaboration with other Organizations

The APHCO always collaborates actively with the affiliated organisations to the ICA and other non-governmental organisations. It may collaborate with some governments which understand the activities of health cooperatives.

Attendants at Shangri-La Hotel, Katmandu, Nepal on 26 August 1997

1. Hon. Dr. Bharat Pradhan – Minister of State of Health, Nepal Chief Guest
2. Dr. Rita Thapa – World Health Organisation Regional Office
3. Mr. E. Narayanan, Mr. T. Haridasan – Tellicherry Coop Hospital, India
4. Mr. Ramesh D. Medhekar, Dr. Vijay Deshmukh, Dr. G.V. Acharya – Shushrusha Citizens Coop Hospital, India.
5. Dr. Toshio Ogino, Dr. Yasuyuki Takahashi, Ms. Takako Yanaga, Mr. Takashi Yoshioka, Ms. Yoko Miyoshi – Medical Coop Committee of JCCU, Japan.
6. Hon. Deepak Prakash Baskota – M.P. Chairman, National Coop Federation of Nepal.
7. Mr. Suman Shrestha, Dr. Saroj Dhital – Public Health Concern Trust, Nepal.
8. Dr. Saniae Lee, Ms. Bok Hee Park, Ms. Lee Mihee – Ansung Medical Cooperative, S. Korea
9. Mr. Lionel Samarasinghe – National Coop Council of Sri Lanka
10. Mr. Robby Tulus, Mr. W.U. Herath, Mr. A.K. Taneja – International Cooperative Alliance, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

Please contact :

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NCC organises National Seminar on Health Co-operatives



Dr. Kato visited a co-operative hospital in Sri Lanka on the occasion of the NCC National Seminar.

The National Co-operative Council of Sri Lanka organised a national seminar on Health Co-operative Services on 13th July, 1998 in Colombo.

More than 30 participants from various Co-operative Hospitals gathered together and discussed issues which they have been facing.

There are a number of Co-operative hospitals in Sri Lanka, but they did not have any network or a national level federation.

During the discussion the participants of the Seminar came to the conclusion that they needed a national network or federation, and organised a working committee in order to help establish a national federation.

Dr. Shoji Kato, chairperson of APHCO and IHCO joined the Seminar and gave a lot of advice and expressed fraternal greetings on behalf of Japanese Health Co-op as well as APHCO and IHCO.

Ms. Yukiko Yamamoto, Gender Advisor, represented the ICA Regional Office at the seminar.