DELIVERING PALLIATIVE CARE EDUCATION IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS: DEVELOPING PROJECT ECHO IN BANGLADESH AND EAST AFRICA

Doherty M,[1,2,3,4] Richardson K[3,4], Lynch-Godrei A[5], Azad TB[6], Ferdous L[7], Ara R[8], Das, E[3,9], Groninger H[10]

[1] The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, [2] The University of Ottawa, [3] Palliative Care in Humanitarian Aid Situations and Emergencies (PallCHASE), [4]Medecins Sans Frontières, [5]The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute, [6] International Organization for Migration, , [7] Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, , [8] Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Nursing College, [9]Kenya Hospice Palliative Care Association, [10]Medstar Health-Georgetown Univ,

Background & Aims:

- Humanitarian health responses often focus on life-saving efforts while overlooking needs of individuals with incurable conditions
- Palliative care training for humanitarian healthcare providers (HCPs) has not been incorporated into humanitarian responses.
- Project ECHO, an established distance-education model to develop a virtual community of practice, has been successfully used to support HCPs providing palliative care in South Asia.

Objective:

- To develop, implement, and assess the impacts of a Project ECHO for Humanitarian Palliative Care in the Rohingya Refugee Crisis in Bangladesh and in Kenya

Methods:

- We developed a core training program consisting of 7 weekly sessions. In addition to the core program, there were monthly mentoring sessions which participants were encouraged to attend to support further learning and practice change.
- Sessions included didactic lecture, case presentation and interactive discussion.
- Surveys assessed participants' knowledge, confidence, and learning experiences pre- and post-program.
- Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square.

Results:

- Over 24 months, 72 online palliative care training sessions, including 6 iterations of the core program and 30 mentoring sessions were conducted
- There were significant improvements in participants' palliative care knowledge and comfort with demonstrated statistical significance.

Participants

- 819 Clinicians participated
  - 141 (17%) of participants from MSF
  - 35% Nurses
  - 28% Medical Assistants
  - 20% Physicians
- Participants from 39 countries
- 45% see <10 palliative care patients per month
- 71% have < 5 years of clinical experience

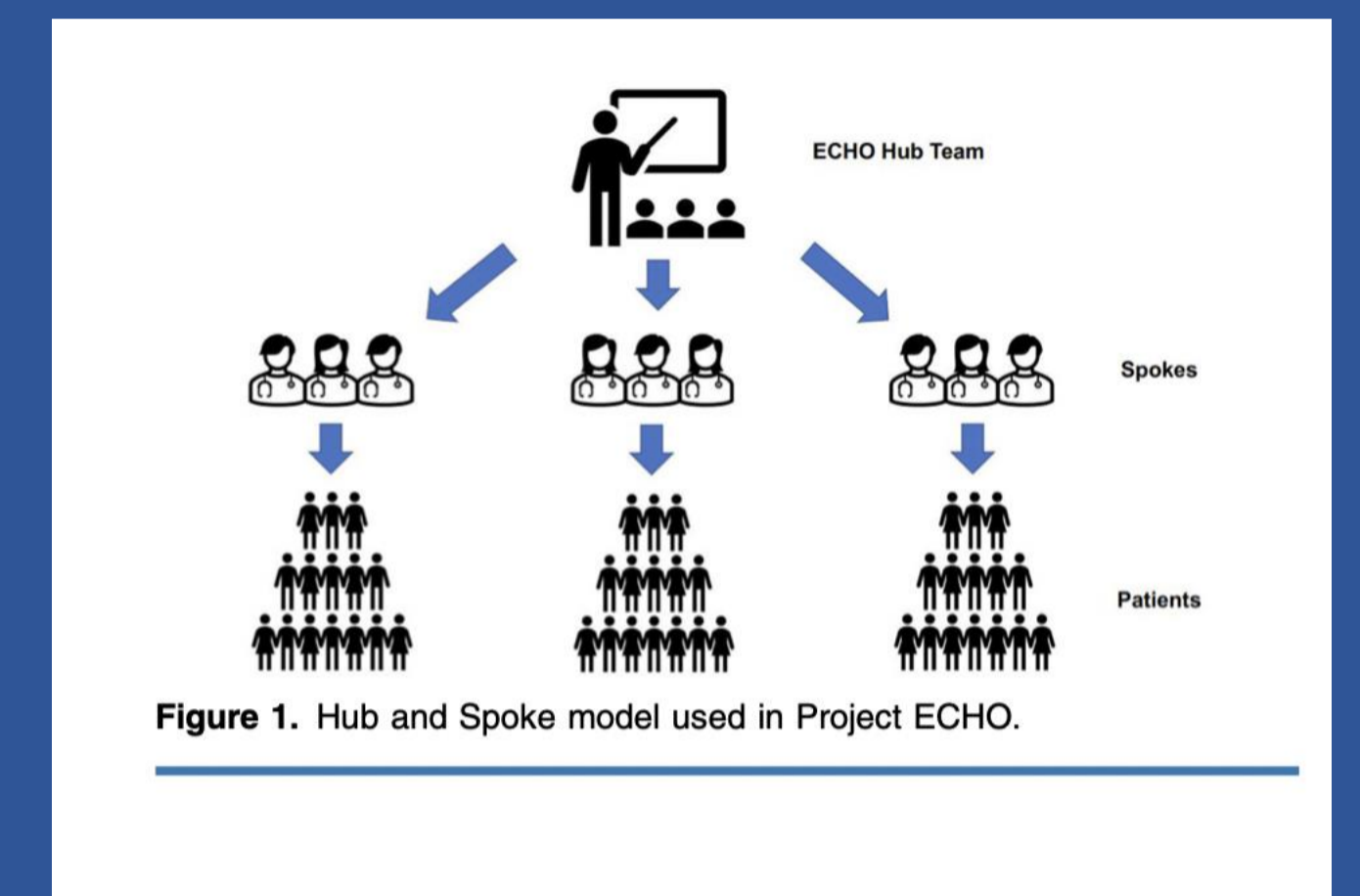|	Bangladesh	Kenya
Number of Courses	5	1
Total # of Sessions	60	12
# CME Sessions	26	4
Total Enrollment	639	180

Curriculum Design and Delivery

Assemble content experts, ECHO platform technical support

Determine session topics, review didactic/case content

Each Course: 7 core and 3 CME sessions

Faculty debrief and conduct regular content revision

TWOWORLDS cancer collaboration

Figure 1. Hub and Spoke model used in Project ECHO.

Benefits of participation, participants agreeing with the following statements (n=51)

I would recommend this program to my colleagues.	98%
This program was a valuable experience for me.	96%
I learned about best practices of care for patients with serious illnesses	94%
This program was an effective way for me to learn	92%

What were the obstacles to changing your clinical practice based on ECHO program? (n=49)

I need for more formal training in palliative care	59%
I need clinical hands-on training in palliative care	49%
I do not have enough time to provide palliative care	18%
PC medications are not available in my setting	16%

Barriers to Participating in ECHO program (n=51)

Technical issues (i.e., internet connectivity)	59%
Lack of time to participate	45%
Language	18%

Core Teaching Topics

Introduction to Palliative Models of Care

Which patients need palliative care

Pain Management

Managing Non-Pain Symptoms

Communication in Advanced Illness

Emotional and Spiritual Support to patients and families

Nursing Issues and Care of the Dying Patient

Mentoring Sessions

Pediatric Palliative Care

Pediatric Pain Management

Communicating with children

Non-pharmacological pain strategies for children

Home-based palliative care

Community-based palliative care model

Challenging ethical situations in palliative care

Family centred care

Trauma informed care

Pain Assessment

Pain treatment using Opioids

The role of palliative care in COVID infection

Conclusions:

- Despite technical challenges, ECHO participants reported significant increases in palliative care knowledge and attitudes
- Challenges for participants included local internet network availability and work scheduling
- Virtual training is a feasible model to support healthcare providers in a humanitarian health response,
- Online training addresses the urgent need for palliative care by supporting clinicians seeking to address the palliative care needs of neonates, children and adolescents.

PallCHASE
Palliative Care in Humanitarian Aid Situations and Emergencies

Project ECHO