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## MS211: Final AIHA report on Semi Project in Kazakhstan

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## HOUSTON – SEMIPALATINSK PARTNERSHIP 1999-2000 FINAL PARTNERSHIP REPORT

### THE PARTNERS

**US Partners:** The Methodist Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Children’s Hospital, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Harris County Hospital District, and General Board of Global Ministries.

**NIS Partners:** Semipalatinsk Regional Administration, the Regional Oncology Dispensary, the Regional Clinical Hospital, the Regional Children’s Hospital, the Emergency First Aid Hospital, the Semipalatinsk Gynecological Hospital, Regional Diagnostic Treatment Center in Kurchatov, Semipalatinsk Medical Academy.

### 1999/2000 PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

**The Houston – Semipalatinsk Partnership developed ten Program objectives, each of which was designed to overlap and thus reinforce activities in other areas:**

- Cancer screening, registry, and chemotherapy clinics
- Infection control
- Maternal and child health
- Health care management, finance, and decision making
- Disaster management, accident preparedness and emergency care
- Nursing education and training
- Clinical pathology
- Semiannual Continuing Medical Education (CME) conferences (spring and fall)
- Public health education of the population
- Laparoscopy/endoscopy

### 1999/2000 KEY EVENTS

- **February 1999.** Dr. Irina Volguina from BCM participated in East-Kazakhstan Regional Cancer Registry Conference. Over 80 health care professionals from Almaty, Pavlodar, Semipalatinsk, and Ust-Kamenogorsk participated in the conference. At the conference in addition to her general presentation, Dr. I. Volguina conducted a mini-conference on epidemiology and quality control, performed demonstration on partnership developed and upgraded cancer registry software, and provided consultations at Semipalatinsk and Ust-Kamenogorsk cancer registries. Houston partners have provided new computers for Semipalatinsk and Ust-Kamenogorsk cancer registries.
- **February 1999.** Dr. A. Weinberg and S. Rozin traveled to Almaty and Semipalatinsk. This trip was not funded through AIHA. In Semipalatinsk, they conducted several meetings with representatives from the city health administration and other key partnership participants. S. Rozin worked with Semipalatinsk cancer registry personal on improving data quality control.
- **May 1999.** A group of three physicians from Pavlodar and Semipalatinsk attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Conference for Cancer Organizations in Atlanta, Georgia. Together with Terry Hays, M.D., a US

oncologist, they presented cancer registry software developed by the partnership. One of the physicians represented the non-governmental organization “Nevada-Semipalatinsk”. Following the conference in Atlanta, the group continued their training in Houston and Austin, Texas.

- **November 1999.** A nurse from The Methodist Hospital, Dr. Weinberg, and Sara Rozin participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> International Nursing Conference in Semipalatinsk. Over 280 nurses from Semipalatinsk, Pavlodar, Ust-Kamenogorsk, and Almaty participated in the conference. The theme of the conference was “Healthy Lifestyles – Healthy Nations.” Betty Hutchison, a nurse from The Methodist Hospital, presented a talk on “Community and Patient Education” and held a mini-conference on Primary Care Nursing. Dr. A. Weinberg and S. Rozin also visited cancer registries established by the partnership in Pavlodar and Semipalatinsk. They met with representatives from the cancer registry in Ust-Kamenogorsk as well. Data entry and quality control issues were discussed as well as the process of entering future data into each of the three registry’s computer systems.

### **1999/2000 ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Introduced Kazakh health care physicians to CDC organizational structure, international departments activities and programs.
- Provided seminar training on how to develop and write scientific grant proposals.
- Introduced Kazakh visitors to the American Cancer Society, its structure, programs, and principles of work.
- Kazakh Partners met with Texas Commissioner of Health.

### **III. PARTNERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS AND MILESTONES**

- Established Regional Association of Cancer Registrars.
- Coordinated donation of \$120,000 worth of drugs used to treat leukemia and other cancers. The drugs were donated through AmeriCares and were used according to Partnership protocols. These drugs had not been available in Pavlodar since 1986 for the treatment of adults and since 1994 for the treatment of children.
- Developed cancer registry software with the primary focus to ensure complete and accurate data collection that complies with international standards. Each cancer registry entered approximately 3000 records into partnership developed cancer registry databases.
- Publication in the Journal of Registry Management (February 2000) about the cancer registry established in Semipalatinsk.
- Pathology research work on prostate cancer.

### **CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

- The shift of regional governmental activity from Semipalatinsk to Pavlodar has had a profound impact on Partnership activities. While it has opened some new avenues of activity, it has closed - or narrowed - others.
- It is difficult to identify new sources of funding to continue original projects as well as develop new ones. We continue to investigate resources in the governmental and private sectors.
- The early lessons that we learned in the original Semipalatinsk-Houston Partnership remain:
  - ❖ The opportunity for important scientific investigation into the health effects of radiation remains,
  - ❖ The need for regular, if no longer daily, communication in order to remain aware of issues facing both sides of the Partnership.
  - ❖ Business opportunities are being evaluated and developed.
  - ❖ Adopting a train-the-trainer approach has undoubtedly increased the numbers impacted on both sides in an exponential fashion.

## CONTACTS

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## IMPACT ON US PARTNERS

The greatest impact of our Partnership activities has been the intangible changes in our knowledge of a people we have come to know and the friendships that have grown from our work together. We remain in regular contact with our colleagues.