

3-19-1995

MS211: First trip to Kazakhstan Executive Summary

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**Executive Summary of TMH/AIHA Partnership Assessment
Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan
February 12-21, 1995.**

This Executive Summary report gives a synopsis of a medical humanitarian mission from February 12-21, to the city of Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan is one of four countries in Central Asia, with the other three being Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan. These countries form part of the New Independent States (NIS) in the former Soviet Union (FSU). Semipalatinsk City is located in the Semipalatinsk Oblast (an Oblast is comparable to a US state in geography and has its own administration, although the Head or Governor is appointed by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan). The trip was sponsored by the American International Health Alliance (AIHA), under the U.S. State Department and the Agency for International Development (USAID), which is part of the U.S. Embassy. This trip resulted in the 22nd partnership between NIS cities and U.S. medical centers. The only other Kazakhstan partnership is between the medical center in Tucson, Arizona and the city of Almaty, Kazakhstan, which is the current capital of Kazakhstan.

PURPOSE OF TRIP

The purpose of the trip was to evaluate and select from among the hospitals presented by the Regional Health Administration of Semipalatinsk those which would participate in a hospital partnership for the next three years. The selected Semipalatinsk hospitals would then sign a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the US partnership lead by The Methodist Hospital (Houston TX), Baylor College of Medicine and the General Board of Global Ministries The United Methodist Church, USAID and AIHA.

SEMIPALATINSK

Semipalatinsk was a secret city of 350,000 people that was "unknown" until 1991. It is located about 50 miles or so East of the FSU's secret "Polygon" nuclear test site, which was selected by Stalin in 1949. The Soviet Union carried out testing (over 500 tests) at the Polygon until 1989. Andrei Sakharov spent about 20 years in this area developing Russia's first and later fission bombs. Kurchatov was the designer of the first Russian thermonuclear bomb.

FACILITIES VISITED

Dr. Bakhit Tumenova, M.D. Director, Semipalatinsk Department of Health and Liquidation of Consequences of Nuclear Testing organized and selected the facilities that were visited. Dr. Tumenova explained that the regional health administration not only served the Oblast of Semipalatinsk but East Kazakhstan Oblast and other surrounding regions (for example, Pablda).

Oblast Diagnostic Hospital
Director: Dr. Ivanovich

Inter-Oblast Oncology Dispensary
Directory: Gabdulmanap Abeyevich Abeyev, M.D.

Ophthalmology Hospital
Director: Galina Zamanova, M.D.

Semipalatinsk Oblast Clinical Hospital
Director: Askar Kairovich Makashev, M.D.

Oblast Children's Hospital
Director: Mukhtar Esendzhanovich Tuleutaev, M.D.

Central City Clinical Hospital
Director: Kaynolla Rollanovich Musin, M.D.

Special visit to Kurchatov, Polyclinic and Hospital¹
Director: Dr. Gorien

Oblast Medical Institute
Rector: Tolegen K. Raisov

Kazakh Scientific-Research Institute of Radiation Medicine and Ecology
Director: Boris Gusev, Ph.D.

¹ A special request was made through the Kazakhstan Ministry of Health and Ministry of Science and Technology offices to the US Embassy in Almaty to have this facility considered for inclusion in the partnership. A subset of the entire team (Weinberg, Lyons, Leafstedt, Ryan) traveled to Kurchatov to make the assessment. After thorough discussion with the regional administration, AIHA and USAID (Almaty) it was decided that it would not be included as a partner hospital. Several alternatives and specific recommendations addressing the unique health care needs in that community and their workforce were provide to USAID for their consideration.

HOSPITALS SELECTED (MOU signed)

A meeting between the AIHA staff, Regional Health Administration and the US team was held in order to select the partnership hospitals. The four hospitals that were selected are the Inter-Oblast Oncology Dispensary, Semipalatinsk Oblast Clinical Hospital, Oblast Children's Hospital and Central City Clinical Hospital. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed by the parties to the partnership from both the US and Kazakhstan representatives to include these four institutions and the US partnership lead by The Methodist Hospital.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment team recommends special attention to the following areas; physician training, nursing training and management, facilities and resource management, special populations (exposure to radiation), and general health care reform. Initial emphasis on basic infection control, neonatal care, emergency care, preventive care (screening and public education) and cancer care and diagnostics.

SABIT

Following meetings with Mr. Randall Wright and Dr. Armin Weinberg, Dr. Zhaksibay Zhumadilov was selected to participate in a SABIT (Special American Business Internship Training Program) funded by the US Department of Commerce. While SABIT is separate from the AIHA partnership program it is complementary. Dr. Zhumadilov's SABIT program will be for a 6 month internship. The objective is to upgrade his management skills so that when he returns to Semipalatinsk he will be able to utilize his training to expand their impact on administration within their facilities, and provide guidance to the Governor on restructuring the private and public health care system of the Oblast.

OTHER TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

1. Briefing by Marilyn Schmidt, General Development Officer, USAID, Almaty (per USAID cable request).
2. Meeting with William Courtney, US Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Dr. Weinberg, Ms. Lyons, Mr. Wright, Mr. Leafstedt and Ms. Schmidt.

3. Letters of support and invitation from governmental and institutional representatives were presented as follows:
 - Governor George W. Bush, Texas to Governor Galimzhan B. Jakianov
 - Mayor Bob Lanier, Houston to Mayor Bosin
 - Michael Williamson, TMH to Governor Galimzhan B. Jakianov
 - Antonio M. Gotto, MD, BCM to Dr. Bakhit Tumenova, Head of Liquidation of the Consequences of Nuclear Testing
 - Michael Williamson, TMH to Dr. Bakhit Tumenova, Head of Liquidation of the Consequences of Nuclear Testing
 - Tom Brotherton, TCH to Dr. Bakhit Tumenova, Head of Liquidation of the Consequences of Nuclear Testing
1. A news conference for local and Kazakhstan media (print and non-print) was held following the signing of the MOU.
2. Galimzhan B. Jakianov, Head of Semipalatinsk Oblast Administration (Governor) held a banquet in our honor.
3. Debriefing with USAID Mission Director Craig Buck and Marilyn Schmidt, General Development Officer concerning Kurchatov and the Semipalatinsk assessment and partnership selection.

NEXT STEPS

1. Attendance by TMH Coordinator, Sara Rozin at AIHA Partnership Coordinators meeting March 10-11, 1995.
2. Initiate SABIT training program for Dr. Zhumadilov (March 23 - July 8, 1995 with follow-up visit beginning in October through early December).
3. Schedule visit by Semipalatinsk partnership representatives to develop detailed workplan and subsequent MOU (tentatively April 5-19, 1995).
4. Attendance by Jean Palmer (TMH) at Nursing Coordinators conference to be held in Moscow first week in April. Head nurses of each Semipalatinsk hospital partner to attend as well.
5. Schedule activities for Governor Jakianov's visit to Texas April 17-20, with health, government, and business leaders and his attendance at the signing of MOU to reflect the workplan (April 18).

Members of the Assessment Team

	Institutional Affiliation	Primary Review Responsibility
Armin D. Weinberg, Ph.D.	Director, Center for Cancer Control Research, Baylor College of Medicine	Team leader and US Partnership Director
Randall Wright	Vice President, The Methodist Hospital of Houston	Evaluation of hospital management, facilities and financing
Cathie Lyons	Ass. Director Health and Welfare, General Board of Global Ministries Program Dept., The United Methodist Church	Continuity and support for partnership within the context of GBGM Semipalatinsk initiative
Philip McCarthy, M.D.	Director, Bone Marrow Transplantation Unit, The Methodist Hospital of Houston, and Assistant Professor of Medicine, Hematology and Oncology Dept. Baylor College of Medicine	Evaluation of general medicine including pediatrics, special emphasis on oncology and hematologic issues
Thomas Wheeler, M.D.	Associate Professor of Clinical Pathology, Baylor College of Medicine, Chair Cancer Committee TMH	Evaluation of pathology services and laboratory resources, special emphasis on thyroid cancer
Jean Palmer, R.N.	Nurse, Cardiac Unit, The Methodist Hospital of Houston	Evaluation of general nursing services, nursing management and training
Leif E. Peterson, Ph.D., M.P.H.	Adjunct Assistant Professor of Medicine, Dept. of Medicine/Cancer Education, Baylor College of Medicine	Evaluation of medical records, computerization, death certificates, tumor registries and radiation exposure information of inhabitants who lived/live in the capture area from epidemiologic perspective
Matthew Leafstedt	Regional Director for Central Asia, American International Health Alliance, Inc., Central Asian Regional Office Almaty, Kazakhstan	
Paul Stronski	Acting Deputy Regional Director for Central Asia, American International Health Alliance, Inc. Central Asian Regional Office Almaty, Kazakhstan	
Terry West	Partnership Coordinator, American International Health Alliance, Inc., Central Office Staff Washington, D.C.	
Michelle Ryan	Coordinator for Semipalatinsk Area Programs, USAID Mission for the Central Asian Region	