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College and Interplast help world's poor manage pain better

Patients in some of the world's poorest countries, including in Bangladesh, will get improved pain management thanks to a partnership between the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) and Interplast Australia & New Zealand (Interplast).

Doctors, nurses and other health workers in Bangladesh will receive training in pain management from today as part of the first trip funded under the new agreement between the College and Interplast.

The College has been running the Essential Pain Management program for three years, helping train local doctors, nurse and other health workers in developing countries to recognise, assess and treat pain and to improve access to analgesic drugs.

An important part of the program is training local participants to become instructors themselves, building the capacity of developing countries to manage pain.

ANZCA Overseas Aid Committee member and co-founder of the Essential Pain Management program, Dr Wayne Morriss, who is leading the trip to Bangladesh, says the program has now been taught in 20 countries in the Pacific, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"Pain is often poorly treated in developing countries due to a lack of staff, inadequate knowledge and the scarcity or absence of analgesic drugs," Dr Morriss says.

"The Essential Pain Management course aims to improve knowledge of pain and provide a simple and cost-effective framework for managing pain and overcoming local barriers."

About 60 people in Bangladesh are expected to be trained in the program during three days at the main teaching hospital in Dhaka.

ANZCA chief executive, Ms Linda Sorrell, said the collaboration with Interplast would also help deliver anaesthesia to developing countries.

"About 50 volunteer anaesthetists are deployed by Interplast for program activities each year," Ms Sorrell said. "This collaboration will help improve the delivery of anaesthesia and pain management to developing countries where inadequate pain management has a devastating impact on people living in poverty."

Interplast CEO, Ms Prue Ingram, said the agreement would use Interplast's already established networks to help deliver improved anaesthesia and pain management.

“Interplast and the College are both strongly committed to the delivery of safe and effective anaesthesia services in the Asia Pacific region and are very pleased to be working together to build capacity,” Ms Ingram said.

- **For more information or to request interviews, please contact ANZCA Media Manager Meaghan Shaw on +61 3 8517 5303, +61 408 259 369 or mshaw@anzca.edu.au. Follow us on Twitter [@ANZCA](https://twitter.com/ANZCA).**