

Summary of the two ASCoN Training of Trainers (ToT) Courses

“Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Rehabilitation Basic Management Skills”

After the ASCoN conference in Chiang Mai in 2017, ASCoN strategic reviewed was conducted. From the ASCoN strategic review, there are five key areas: 1) Training and Service Development; 2) Development of educational materials; 3) Networking and information exchange; 4) Research and 5) Policy development.

According to the training and service development, Assoc. Prof. Apichana Kovindha (Thailand) proposed a training of trainers (ToT) course which aimed to identify potential rehabilitation physicians who might be interested in increasing their knowledge and skills in SCI rehabilitation management, and becoming a leader and trainer of SCI rehabilitation in their countries in the future.

The first course was a 5-day course conducted by Assoc. Pro. Apichana Kovindha. It was held a week before the ASCoN 2018 in Yangon, Myanmar. There were 20 trainees from 8 countries (8 from Myanmar, 3 from Indonesia, 2 from Thailand, 1 from Bangladesh, 1 from Malaysia, 1 from Mongolia, 1 from Nepal, 1 from Philippines, 1 from India and 1 from Sri Lanka). Most of them were rehabilitation physicians and some have experienced working at a rehab center or SCI rehab facility at university hospital. The course was supported by ISCoS, SPIRIT, HI, Livability, and other organizations.

After the success of the 1st course, it was agreed to conduct it again at the following ASCoN conferences. Due to time constrain, the 2nd course was tailored to a 3-day course held before the ASCoN 2019 in Kaula Lumpur, Malaysia. This time there were 15 trainees (6 from Indonesia, 4 from Malaysia, 1 from Bangladesh, 1 from Nepal, 1 from South Korea, 1 from Singapore, and 1 from Iran). Again, the trainees were very satisfied with the course and rated all topics in the course very useful. The following are trainees' reflection: *"After the ToT course, I got so many management skills for SCI patients, so many issues that happen in my and other countries in Asia, and know how to manage it from it properly. We make the best networking and sharing each other,"* and *"I think it is possible to make big data in Asia region, so we can develop many research together and link each other."*

After submitted the ToT evaluation and feedback from the ASCoN ToT 2019 course to supporters, the ASCoN committee agreed to conduct the ToT yearly if possible. The organizers of the ASCoN 2020 in Korea and the ASCoN 2021 in Philippines agreed. Unfortunately, due to pandemic of Covid19, the ToT course had to be cancelled.

So far, some of the trainees are still connected through social media, Line groups of ASCoN 2018 and ASCoN 2019 with the trainer, Associate Prof. Apichana Kovindha who supported the trainees from these two courses from time-to-time such as participating as a resource person in SCI case conferences with Dr. Farida Arisanti (trainee of the 1st course) and rehabilitation residents from Hasan Sadikin General Hospital, Bandung, Indonesia.

About research, since 2017 Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand have been participated in the InSCI multi-national community survey and regional research proposals from these three countries have been planned. In 2020, only one proposal was approved. This year in 2021, three trainees from the two courses (1st course: Dr. Sintip Pattanakuhar from Chiang Mai U, Thailand and Dr. Steven Setiono from U of Indonesia, Indonesia; and 2nd course: Dr. Fatimah Binti Ahmedy from U Malayasia Sabah, Malaysia) have been invited to participate in a research proposal with Assoc. Profs. Apichana Kovindha and Julia Patrick Engkasan, "Impact of Bladder Care and Complications on Quality of Life: Perspective of Persons with Traumatic Spinal Cord Injury Living in Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand", which is expected to be approved from the InSCI study center soon.

After the two courses, two trainees have had an opportunity to run an SCI course or conference, Dr Baljinnyam Avirmed from Mongolia organized the first SCI course in Mongolia and Dr. Gilmore Senolos from Philippines has join the scientific committee of this year ASCoN 2021 conference in Philippines. At ASCoN 2021, there will be a session for the ToT trainees to present their research papers.

We do hope that later this year (2021) or next year (2022) the Covid19 would be controlled and people would be allowed to travel safely. And to control the cost of organizing the future course, it may better not to link it with the annual ASCoN conference. The preferred venue is in Chiang Mai due to low cost.

Although there have been few outputs from the trainees and not all are still actively involved in SCI rehabilitation management, developing human resources especially rehabilitation physicians who will lead their teams to improve SCI persons' functioning and quality of life in long-term is still necessary and should be continued. The proposed ToT course for the end of 2021 or early 2020 is a continuation of the course 1, some trainees from the first two ToT courses are planned to be selected. They should be active in SCI teaching, management and/or research. This course certified that they would become a trainer. According to the strategic review, a 2-week course may be necessary to certify them as an ASCoN trainer. However, the length of the course may be changed depending on available budget. In addition, the 3-day ToT course 1 may be useful for rehabilitation professionals.

Reported by Apichana Kovindha

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