



Mid-Main Friends of Bangladesh Newsletter – Spring 2008



Why we think this is important

Our partners and contacts in Bangladesh have encouraged us in this project. Many Bangladeshi nurses and doctors say that health care is very poor in their country.

They share our vision of more and better professional development programs for nurses, higher practice standards for public services and greater respect for the nursing profession.

IUBAT in Dhaka

Dhaka's International University of Business Agriculture and Technology (IUBAT) is Bangladesh's first non-government university. It was established in 1991 as a non-profit institution <http://www.iubat.edu> Its newly built campus beside the Turag River includes classrooms, offices, laboratories, a cafeteria, and a recreation hall. IUBAT programs currently lead to degrees in Agriculture, Business (BBA and MBA), Engineering, Computer Sciences, Tourism & Hospitality Management and now Nursing (BSN). Courses are taught entirely in English.

Progress with Nursing Program development

Program Coordinator Dr. Karen Lund reports that there are now over 65 students enrolled in the program. The senior 'batch' is expected to graduate in 2009.

Karen has recently organized clinical practice at two hospitals near the campus. One specializes in maternity care, the other in dialysis, surgery and trauma.

Starting this summer, students will study in Dhaka's "cholera hospital", ICDDR, B (www.icddrb.org). Monsoon season brings water-borne disease; at last summer's peak, the hospital admitted over 1,000 patients each day! We also plan to partner with ICDDR, B to provide professional development for nurses working there.

This summer and fall, students studying mental health nursing will practice at the National Institute for Mental Health. For community health courses, they will practice in the outpatient programs at ICDDR, B, also at a centre for people with disabilities, at the Families for Children orphanage and in the shanties near the IUBAT campus.

We appreciate the generous support of Canadian educators: Faculty and students from Athabasca University, BC Institute of Technology, Langara College, North Island College, Selkirk College, Simon Fraser University, University of BC and University of Victoria have taught at IUBAT recently. Others have donated textbooks and lesson plans and helped recruit other visiting faculty.



Junior batch on their first day of practice in Apollo Hospital, with Katia Wong RN, CSIH intern



Warm temperatures and abundant rainfall give rural Bangladesh a lush green appearance. Even in the busy capital, Dhaka, vegetation grows luxuriously. These two photos show the IUBAT campus, with just two years difference. This scene is five minutes from the faculty guesthouse.

For your consideration: This fall we begin a fund-raising campaign to support scholarships and practicums in Vancouver for the senior students.

How will nursing education improve the population's health?

Nurses in Bangladesh have traditionally been poorly trained, poorly paid, and disrespected as professionals. Nurse educators are often far-removed from practice and out-of-touch with the skills necessary to provide even basic patient care.

A major shift is needed, and indeed is taking place, in Bangladeshi nursing. Nurses need consistent, ongoing education based on international evidence-based practice.

When education improves, practice standards are raised, the credibility of nursing increases, better wages are demanded, more nurses are attracted to the profession – and patient care improves.

Who We Are

The Mid-Main Community Health Centre Association is a non-profit society operating a multi-discipline health centre in Vancouver, Canada. <http://www.midmaincommunityhealth.net/>

Mid-Main sponsors health-related activities linked to the International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology.

For further information

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Left: CSIH-NetCorps intern Katia Wong and Selkirk College's Lorill Harding.
Below: Sandy Rubin at ICDDR, B.



Visiting faculty needed for upcoming semesters

The IUBAT Nursing program runs year-round. Students graduate with a BSN. This program was approved in 2004 by the Bangladesh Council of Nursing. We rely on international volunteers to assist with teaching and clinical supervision in all areas of nursing practice.

Lesson plans for most courses are already prepared and all teaching is in English. We can provide a safe and interesting experience in classroom, hospital and community settings. It helps if guest faculty can stay for an entire semester, or at least six weeks as that is best for everybody. We cannot provide airfare or salary, but we do offer airport pick-up, a nice guesthouse near the campus, meals and local transport during your stay. We can also issue tax-deductible receipts for all expenses associated with your visit.

Previous experience in teaching nursing is not essential. The most important qualities for visiting faculty are openness to other cultures, enthusiasm about developing novice nurses, and flexibility.

When in Dhaka, most volunteers enjoy their interactions with the other faculty, students and neighbours. It is a friendly and appreciative atmosphere where we are completely immersed in the local society. Please contact us if you would like to know more (details below left).



Maureen Maloney of Langara College coaching junior students in class discussion, Autumn 2007



Dr. Muhammad Morshed of BC Centre for Disease Control. Visiting lecturer and volunteer recruiter



Senior students with volunteers Judi Morton and Kerry Wannell, Program Coordinator Dr. Karen Lund, and guest lecturer Dr. Afsana Kaosar who lectured on her experience developing birthing centres.