

The application of the mother kangaroo method in Albania

The Durrës Obstetric Hospital mission to the Burlo Garofolo Hospital of Trieste, Italy

2nd to 6th May 2005

Foreword

The mission was carried out in the framework of the activities aimed at providing technical assistance for the set up in Albania of the "Mother Kangaroo Method" The innovation for the treatment and outpatient care of premature and low birth weight children, developed at the Maternal-Infant Institute of Bogotá, Colombia, is implemented in different Maternity Hospitals of various countries.

Since 2003, the IFAD/UNOPS PASARP Programme carried out activities to promote the Mother Kangaroo method in Albania, stimulating a great deal of interest among national and local health authorities.

IFAD/UNOPS/PASARP drafted a project to facilitate the implementation of this method and to enhance the pediatrics skills through training and experience exchange opportunities. The project will be implemented in the Durrës Obstetric Hospital and will contribute to the realization of a National Albanian Center for the Mother Kangaroo Method capacity building and implementation. The Center will also develop and promote activities to realize "Mother Kangaroo Units" in other Albanian Hospitals and medical centers.

On the early 2005, the Italian "Burlo Garofolo" Medical Institute in Trieste, pioneer of the Mother Kangaroo Method implementation in Italy, in consideration of its long-standing collaboration with Albanian medical Institutions also including training activities in the M.K. Method, agreed with the IDEASS Initiative to provide the Durrës project with scientific assistance, also receiving scientific missions of Albanian Doctors to Trieste.

The Durrës Hospital mission to Trieste

From 2nd to 6th May, a delegation of the Durrës Obstetric Hospital carried out a scientific mission in Trieste, Italy, visiting the "Burlo Garofolo" Institute. The mission was realized thanks to the close collaboration with Chiara Strutti, Coordinator of the International Debate Project of the WHO Mediterranean Centre.

The delegation was composed by the Durrës Hospital Director, Dr. Kristaq Huta; the vice-director and inter-hospital project coordinator, Dr. Spiro Musha; the Head of Obstetrics-Gynecology, Dr. Arjan Prodani; the Head of Neonatology Dr. Dhurata Beshello. The Durrës area manager of the IFAD/UNOPS/PASARP Program also participated to the activities in Trieste.

The mission objective was to extend the knowledge of the Albanian delegation in this methodology, for the realization in the Durrës Hospital of a National Albanian Center for Mother Kangaroo Method capacity building and implementation.

Visit to Burlo Garofolo Institute

From 2nd to 4th May, and during the 6th May, the Albanian delegation attended numerous meetings with the Burlo Garofolo's Medical Institute scientific staff, in particular with the Scientific Director, Dr. Tamburlini; the Head of Neonatology, Dr. De Marini, the Head of Obstetrics-Gynecology and Director of the Specialization School, Prof. Guaschino, and many others.

During these meetings, the Albanian doctors received complete and updated information about the following issues: M.K. Method implementation; follow-up methodologies for newborns; analysis of clinical aspects; international debate conclusions on M.K. Method (Meeting 2004 in Brazil and WHO guidelines).

A specific meeting was held with Dr. D'Avanzo e Dr. Cattaneo, of the Unit for Health Services Research and International Health. During this meeting a fruitful discussion took place on the best conditions to implement the method in Albania, sharing ideas and experiences.

By mean of further meetings with The Burlo Garofolo's para-medical staff, in particular with the nurses Mrs. Tamara and Mrs. Strajn, the Albanian doctors could approach the nursing aspects of the innovation, of great relevance for the method implementation success.

The Albanian delegation could also analyze a relevant selection of the international scientific literature on the method application and results. At the end of their visit the Albanian doctors have been provided with copy of the most significant articles and studies on Mother Kangaroo methodology.

Visit to the Local Health Agency of Trieste

On 5th May, the delegation led by Dr. Chiara Strutti, visited the District n.3 of the Local Health Agency of Trieste (Italian Public Health System). The aim of the visit was to acquire information on the links between the territory health base institutions and the Hospital, and to analyze respective goals in the Method implementation and follow-up methodologies.

A first meeting with the District Director, Dr. Mario Reali, allowed the Albanian doctors to have a clear overview of the district organization, and understand how it operates for the mother and child health care. The delegation could also verify how the Agency operates to assist children with chronic diseases and how the health territorial consulting activity works. During a work meeting with the responsible of the "Unità Operativa Bambini Adolescenti", Dr. Sola and the obstetric of the Family orientation Centre, Dr. Serrequi, an interesting discussion took place on the Health territorial Centres activity and perspectives.

A resume of all the territorial activities of the Municipality of Trieste was presented to the Albanian delegation by the coordinator of "Unità Operativa Territoriale n.4", Mr. Marcello Bergamini.

The final work meeting coordinated by Dr. Chiara Strutti, consented to put in evidence the most interesting aspects of the Italian experience in territorial health activities and to provide the Albanian delegation with useful data to implement the activity in Albania.

Conclusions

At the end of the mission, considering the whole activities carried on, the following conclusions were pointed out by the delegation:

- The Kangaroo Method, implemented with success in different countries, is well adaptable also to the Albanian contest. In particular, it could be adopted in case of low-weight newborn babies that don't present respiratory distress or infections.
- To apply the method in Albania it is necessary to improve the mother's hospitalization conditions by: Individuate a separate area for the "Kangaroo mothers"; Improve the mother comfort; Ameliorate the hygienic conditions of mother's hospitalization.
- The Albanian delegation will start the method implementation in the Durrës Hospital during the period that immediately follows the mission.
- The territorial health service in Durrës must be re-organized in order to address the possible Kangaroo mothers to the Hospital and to carry on the activities for the follow-up of the "kangaroo babies", as soon they are discharged from the hospital.