

ATLS™ INTERNATIONAL

ATLS International is a monthly electronic newsletter that circulates the latest quality information on news and events across the ATLS global spectrum. Please contact Jasmine Alkhatib at jalkhatib@facs.org with questions or suggestions.

REGION XIV: LATIN AMERICA

ATLS–Mexico

by *Mauricio Di Silvio, MD, FACS, ATLS–Mexico Chair*



April 1986. First ATLS course in Mexico at the Hospital Central Militar.



Dr. Octavio Ruiz Speare

The Carlos Slim Institute of Health recently presented Dr. Octavio Ruiz with the Galardón Carlos Slim, one of the most important awards granted to doctors in Latin America and the Caribbean, for his commitment to health and trauma patients. Congratulations, Dr. Ruiz!

Mexico, a pioneer of ATLS in Latin America, launched its first course in 1986.

The founding of ATLS–Mexico was prompted in part by the tragic earthquake that struck Mexico City in September 1985. The 8.1-magnitude earthquake devastated the nation's capital. Thousands of buildings were either destroyed or seriously damaged, and approximately 10,000 lives were lost. Bringing ATLS to Mexico was an immediate response to the challenges in trauma education that the country faced.

Today there are nearly 130 centers that facilitate ATLS courses throughout Mexico. All centers maintain strict quality-control standards for the program. In just under 25 years, Octavio Ruiz, MD, and Ana Luisa Argomedo, MD, Mexico's National Educators, have graduated 982 ATLS instructors, 600 of whom are still actively teaching the course. Educators in Mexico

are responsible for ensuring that their instructors are up-to-date on all educational aspects of the program. Additionally, more than 120 coordinators are trained in ATLS. Their activities are directed and evaluated by Rosa Aurora, Luz Alba, and Judith Anguiano from the ACS-COT central office of Mexico.

Having more than 36,000 doctors trained in ATLS, Mexico's experience earned the country the opportunity to collaborate with the ACS-COT in the establishment of the ATLS Program in Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

In April 2011, ATLS in Mexico will celebrate 25 years since the establishment of the program, as well as the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Mexican Chapter. The anniversary celebration and the scientific meeting will be held in Acapulco, Mexico, in May 2011.

ALL ARE INVITED!

Region Meeting Reminder

The second annual Region XIV meeting in Latin America will take place on Friday, May 21, 2010, in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Karen Brasel, MD, FACS (ATLS Subcommittee Chair); Will Chapleau, EMT-P, RN, TNS (ATLS Manager); and Jasmine Alkhatib (ATLS International Coordinator) are confirmed to attend the meeting. Additionally, representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Panama will be present.

If you are interested in attending, kindly contact Martha Romero, ATLS–Bolivia National Coordinator, as soon as possible at amdabol@cotas.com.bo.

Mexico has collaborated in the establishment of the ATLS Program in Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica, Bolivia, and Ecuador.



Rosa Aurora Ruiseco (Administrator); Mauricio Di Silvio, MD (ATLS–Mexico Chair); and Roberto Torres, MD (President of the Mexican Chapter).

REGION XV: EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA

Site Visit in Syria

by Saud Al-Turki, MD, FACS, ATLS–Saudi Arabia Chair, ATLS–Middle East Co-Chair, and Subash Gautam, MD, FACS, ATLS–UAE Chair, ATLS–Middle East Co-Chair

With the ATLS Subcommittee's recent approval to introduce ATLS to Syria, Saud Al-Turki, MD, FACS, and Subash Gautam, MD, FACS, participated in a site visit in Hama, Syria, April 2–3, 2010, to ensure that the designated course facilities are well equipped for the program. They share their experiences below.

Following our arrival at the Damascus airport, we immediately traveled to Hama, Syria, to begin the site visit. The well-organized meeting started at 8:00 pm and was attended by a group of surgeons and ER physicians from all areas of Syria. Among the attendees were the Chairman of the Syrian Surgical Society and Syrian Emergency Society, as well as representatives from the Center for Continuing Medical and Health Education (CCMHE) in Hama. Another distinguished attendee was the Vice-Minister representing the Syrian Emergency Medical Services and the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Al-Turki gave the standard introductory lecture for ATLS promulgation, which was followed by a half-hour discussion and two presentations. The first presentation was given by Yasser Abdulrazzak, MD, who described CCMHE as a not-for-profit organization. The center currently runs many courses, including BLS, ACLS, NRP, FCCS, and EBM, with more than 2,000 trainees. He also stated that there is strong support for introducing trauma courses in Syria due to the high numbers of car accidents throughout the country. The second lecture was given by the Ayman Sabbagh, MD, dean of the faculty of nursing in Hama.

The next morning, we visited the OB/GYN and pediatric hospital's training center, where most of the aforementioned courses are conducted. The lecture room accommodates up to 35 students and is well equipped with basic audiovisual equipment and a large flat-screen TV. Close to the lecture area are five rooms with center tables and chairs, which can be used for the skills stations portion of the ATLS course. There are two additional rooms with Internet access and printers and telecommunication equipment that can be used by faculty members.



Group photo taken during the Syrian site visit.

While we also conducted two other site visits in a nursing school and a veterinary college, we consider the OB/GYN and pediatric hospital's training center the most suitable to run the ATLS Program.



Dr. Al-Turki and Dr. Gautam evaluate an animal laboratory.

Observations

1. There is evident interest in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to conducting the ATLS Program in Syria.
2. There is strong support from the Syrian Surgical Society.
3. There is difficulty in English language communication, as medicine has been traditionally taught in Arabic, and there was a request for possible translation of course materials. However, most are in favor of organizing the course in English, and Dr. Gautam advised the group to strongly consider teaching the course in its original language.
4. The lecture room and skills stations were adequate, but there is a concern about the animal laboratory.
5. There is understanding of and willingness to follow the ACS-COT and ATLS Subcommittee rules and regulations, including the importance of running a quality

course, maintaining copyrighted materials, and following the promulgation rules and standards.

6. They have identified two coordinator candidates and are aware of the need for strong faculty. The search for a potential educator has been challenging so far, but they hope to find one in the near future.
7. They have sufficient experience to conduct the ATLS Program considering they currently organize similar courses.

Recommendations

1. To approve Syria as a new country for ATLS promulgation after completing the initial training course requirement in either the UAE or Saudi Arabia.
2. To consider sending a group of potential coordinators to observe a course in the UAE or Saudi Arabia prior to training.
3. To ensure adequate animal laboratory space availability before conducting the inaugural course.

REGION XV: EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA



The Region XV meeting in Sweden was cancelled due to Eyjafjallajökull's eruption in April. The last time this volcano erupted was in 1821, and the eruption lasted for two years.

Region 15 Meeting in Sweden: Cancelled

Last month, an Icelandic volcano eruption led to unprecedented flight cancellations throughout Europe, resulting in the cancellation of the annual Region XV meeting. The meeting was scheduled for April 23–24, 2010, in Linköping, Sweden. ATLS representatives from more than 15 countries were expected to attend. Following is a message from Pedro Moniz Pereira, MD, FACS (ATLS–Europe Chair):

Having had a temporary setback due to the "powers of nature," we are rescheduling our meeting for:

October 1, 2010 • 8:00 am–4:00 pm
Washington Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
Washington, DC • USA

The program and other details will follow soon. We hope all of you can make it.

Pedro Moniz Pereira, MD, FACS

REGION XVI: AUSTRALASIA

Pakistani Coordinators Abroad

There is no question that the expansion of the ATLS Program allows faculty members to share their experiences with one another across the globe. The ATLS Program office is getting more and more requests from ATLS instructors and coordinators who are interested in participating in a course abroad. Opportunities to connect with ATLS representatives from other countries are not limited to the annual international meeting and country promulgation activities. Recently, ATLS course sites have begun sending their coordinators abroad to observe an ATLS course in hopes of strengthening the program.

Last March, Professor Zafar Ullah Chaudhry (ATLS–Pakistan Chair) asked Pakistani coordinators Saima Jamil and Shakra Hameed to attend an Instructor course in Melbourne, Australia. Ms. Jamil (ATLS–Pakistan National Coordinator) and Ms. Hameed were to observe the course alongside Lesley Dunstall (ATLS–Australia National Coordinator) and take note of the course coordination.

"My first thought was, *where are the rest of the coordinators?*" said Ms. Jamil, surprised by the lack of coordinators on the first day of the Instructor course. In fact, Lesley Dunstall was the only course coordinator available to faculty members throughout the duration of the course. According to Ms. Jamil, "In Pakistan, we'll have six coordinators helping us to keep things in order ... but I quickly realized that with additional course preparation, and with the help of other faculty members, one coordinator is capable of coordinating the course alone without feeling overwhelmed."

With an efficient system in place, Lesley Dunstall has coordinated numerous ATLS courses in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and Fiji for more than 20 years. From keeping course equipment in labeled bins to preparing paperwork far in advance, Ms. Dunstall is always ready to coordinate a course at a moment's notice, noted Ms. Jamil.

Aside from the above-and-beyond course organization that Ms. Jamil described, she also emphasized the importance of a student and faculty dinner. On the first day of the Instructor course, students and faculty dined at a French restaurant. "Students sometimes feel intimidated by instructors during the course or are distracted by their studies, but during these types of dinner parties, students feel that they can speak freely ... more easily. It breaks the ice. They clear their minds at these events and give themselves a break from the course," Ms. Jamil explained. ATLS–Pakistan also hosts dinners, which consist of local cuisine, for their students and faculty.

"Observing the Instructor course in Australia was very refreshing. Every coordinator does things slightly differently, while maintaining ATLS standards.... This experience provided me with ideas that I will keep in mind for future courses in Pakistan," said Ms. Jamil.



Lesley Dunstall presents a Certificate of Attendance to Saima Jamil.



Pakistani coordinators and Australian coordinators stop for a picture.



Faculty meeting on the first day of the course.

About Our Organization...

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) was founded in 1913 to raise the standards of surgical practice and to improve the care of the surgical patient. The College has worked to establish guidelines for the care of the trauma patient. The Advanced Trauma Life Support Course teaches a systematic, concise approach to the early care of the trauma patient. This course is vital to guiding care for the injured patient in emergency department trauma rooms. The course training provides a common language that can save lives in critical situations.