

International Emergency Medicine Fellowship (IEM)

International emergency medicine (IEM) projects continued in 2006, following the launch of the first International Emergency Medicine (IEM) Fellowship program in Canada at the University of Toronto in July 2005.

In October 2006, Dr. Valerie Krym, Director of the IEM Fellowship program, Dr. Delia Curea, resident physician and Steve Scott RN, traveled to Cluj-Napoca, Romania to implement a triage system in the emergency department (ED) at the Cluj County Hospital. This university-affiliated hospital is the tertiary care centre for Cluj and the surrounding region in northwest Romania. The project builds on a successful comprehensive needs assessment and staff education program carried out at the Cluj County Hospital ED in October 2005. These initiatives are part of an ongoing collaboration between the University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Cluj-Napoca and the University of Toronto.

The needs assessment identified that a triage system was a priority. Triage is the process where patients' injuries and illnesses are assessed and prioritized to ensure patients who need care most urgently are treated first. The first step in setting up a triage system involved hosting two emergency nurses from Romania at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre. Thanks to successful fundraising in Toronto's Romanian community, an exchange trip was organized for two nurses, Kinga Ferenczy and Michaela Bajko, in Toronto in September 2006. The two Romanian emergency nurses received training in triage, trauma care and advanced cardiac life support. These new skills and knowledge enabled them to help train their Romanian colleagues when the University of Toronto team returned to Romania.



Front of Sunnybrook Emergency Department: (left to right) Dr. Valerie Krym, Robin Horodyski (nurse educator, Sunnybrook), Kinga Ferenczy, Michaela Bajko, Dr. Delia Curea

Dr. Krym, Dr. Curea, and Steve Scott RN returned to Cluj in October 2006. They established a triage system, helped reorganize the emergency department for the new triage system, trained Romanian nurses and physicians in triage concepts, and helped create a new patient chart for the emergency department. They also provided 24 lectures on topics requested by the Romanian staff. As a result of the triage implementation project, the Cluj County Hospital ED now has the first comprehensive triage system in northern Romania.

Donations were a critical success to the 2006 project. A book drive in Toronto collected 300 nursing and medical textbooks to augment the small Cluj County Hospital ED library started in 2005. The biomedical engineering department at Sunnybrook donated medical equipment and supplies valued at CAD \$10,000. The team took these donations to Cluj in 2006. In addition, donations from Toronto's Romanian community allowed the team to purchase essential medical equipment and supplies valued at CAD \$3,500 from vendors in Cluj.

The Canadian team was received warmly by their Romanian hosts and staff, and invited to return to Romania in 2007. The proposed project for 2007 will include a second exchange trip to address physician education and leadership, and sending a large shipment of medical equipment and supplies to Romania. Donations are needed and fundraising is underway. Dr. Krym plans to lead another project in Romania in the fall 2007.

In December 2006, the Senate of the University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Cluj-Napoca, Romania appointed Dr. Valerie Krym as a Visiting Professor in recognition of her contribution to emergency medicine in Romania.

For further information regarding the IEM Fellowship or the Romanian EM project, contact Dr. Valerie Krym at v.krym@utoronto.ca



Group in Romania: emergency department staff at Cluj County Hospital, Romania (standing, left to right: Dr. Krym, Dr. Curea, Steve Scott)

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