



SUMMARY REPORT

Wendy Foo received the RCOT International Travel Award 2018 towards a visit to Bangladesh to support a disaster preparedness project and clinical training to emergency teams responding to the Rohingya crisis. Wendy works as project assistant at Humanity & Inclusion (formerly known as Handicap International) within the UK Emergency Medical Team initiative.

The visit was hosted by Humanity & Inclusion (HI) Bangladesh in July 2018. Wendy was part of a team of six from the UK Emergency Medical Team Rehabilitation Specialist Cell. The team comprising physiotherapists, nurses and an occupational therapist delivered 4 days of workshops to a multidisciplinary audience including key stakeholders from government ministries, non-governmental organizations and rehabilitation centres, as well as emergency teams based in Cox Bazar, a total of 40 participants.

Clinical workshops covered a range of trauma specialities including brain injury, spinal cord injury, burns and plastics, peripheral nerve injuries, fractures, amputee management and splinting. Wendy was involved in facilitating the brain injury, splinting and spinal cord injury modules which combined lecture style teaching and hands on practical sessions with learning through simulation. The participants quickly showed their preference for practical sessions which required the facilitating team to respond by adapting prepared material to become more interactive. Wendy and her team were particularly impressed by the knowledge and skills of the participants which facilitated skill sharing within the group. Following these sessions, feedback indicated that there was a significant increase in reported confidence across all clinical areas.

This was followed by three days of working alongside mobile teams in the refugee camp to provide on-the-job training. The UK team were able to spend time with all eight teams in action with their patients with a wide range of conditions and ages. The team observed how difficult accessibility could be for those with disabilities requiring mobility aids or wheelchairs as the ground was often muddy, tents were built into hilly areas and narrow walkways between shelters existed. Wendy was able to work jointly with the local rehabilitation officers on more complex cases and had the opportunity to shadow nursing, psychosocial support and protection visits. Mobile apps were used to record initial assessments and follow up sessions which were collated centrally; this was especially remarkable given the low resource setting. To conclude, the UK team ran further training sessions on selection of evidence based interventions, positioning and functional approaches to rehabilitation which were well received.

Having previously worked in low resource development settings, the visit provided Wendy with additional insight into the challenges of rehabilitation in a humanitarian setting as well as an appreciation of the work of Humanity and Inclusion's involvement in emergency responses within a refugee context. Since returning to the UK, Wendy has drawn on this experience to communicate with others around humanitarian issues and running simulation trainings to prepare others for similar deployments.

Wendy would like to give thanks to the RCOT and Humanity & Inclusion Bangladesh for their support towards this visit.