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2008 International Pain Policy Fellows reconvene in Madison

The Pain & Policy Studies Group (PPSG) / WHO Collaborating Center at the University of Wisconsin Carbone Cancer Center is pleased to announce the successful update meeting of the 2008 class of International Pain Policy Fellows (IPPF). Held in Madison from 24-26 June 2009, the IPPF Update served as an opportunity for the Fellows to share their progress and experiences to improve opioid availability in their respective countries (Armenia, Georgia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kenya, and Nepal) following the IPPF training course held one year ago.

A wide variety of topics were discussed that relate to drug procurement and supply chain issues, legal and regulatory requirements, international drug convention obligations, and systems issues including healthcare infrastructure and level of palliative care development and education. As an example of progress, in one country, patients were previously required to have their prescription forms authorized through an ink seal and a signature that could only be obtained by physically presenting it to the central office at the National Competent Authority. To solve this problem, the Fellow has been involved in a government Task Force that has drafted a new regulation, which will eliminate the need to seek this authorization and will create a new electronic control system allowing for prescription verification and tracking.

Several international experts and observers gathered with the PPSG to learn about the Fellows activities and challenges, and to review their Action Plans in order to provide real time advice about how the Plans may be improved to best meet opioid availability objectives, given the current in-country situation.

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