



2006 PONSETI SEMINAR SOUTH AFRICA, 27&28 JULY

**98% said the Ponseti Seminar would change the way they run their practice
96% said they would attend another Ponseti Seminar**

The 1st South African Ponseti Seminar for Clubfoot Care was hosted by STEPS Charity with the Johannesburg Hospital's Paediatric Orthopaedic Ward.

The South African Ponseti Seminar had the endorsement of Dr Ignacio Ponseti and the Wits Medical School. Donald Gordon Medical Centre, an independent university hospital committed to advancing specialist training and research, provided the conference facility for lectures and practical sessions.

I congratulate you for your enormous efforts to organize the convention which I know was a great success. - I.V. Ponseti, 8 August 2006

THE DELEGATES

The intention for the 1st Ponseti Seminar was to obtain consensus from South African paediatric orthopaedic surgeons. We had good representation from all over South Africa, our neighbour Lesotho, private and state practice, and orthopaedics professors from leading medical schools. Total attendance of 56 delegates far exceeded expectations (and our original database), confirming the positive response to the Ponseti technique.

Surgeon/Professor/Registrar: 40
Orthopaedic Nurse/Casting Technician: 13
Physiotherapist: 2
Orthotist: 1

Geographic spread was South Africa's main centres, some smaller towns serving rural areas and the Kingdom of Lesotho: Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban, East London, Bloemfontein, Mthatha, Nelspruit, Empangeni, Welkom, Ladysmith, Lephalale (Naboomspruit), QwaQwa, Empangeni, Potchefstroom, Bethlehem, Mtunzini.

THE FACULTY AND PROGRAMME

International faculty:

The international speakers were hard-working and committed to making the seminar a success. They brought a lot of demonstration models for use at the seminar.

Dr Shafique Pirani (Canada), Dr Naomi Davis (UK), Dr Monica Nogueira (Brazil)

Guest speaker: Prof Arnold Christianson (Human Geneticist, NHLS Wits University, South Africa)

Other speakers: Dr Mark Eltringham, Gavin Shnier (Orthotist), Karen Moss (Parents' perspective)

Practical sessions

Day 1: 5 patients came for casting from the Johannesburg hospital, ages ranged from newborn to a few months old. The 3 international Ponseti doctors and Dr Eltringham did the casting, assisted by a volunteer delegate as the others watched. There was a follow-up practical casting session for all delegates to practice the technique on the Mitchell rubber legs.

Day 2: Parents brought in treated patients at different ages and stages, an infant in fulltime FAB wear, a 2 year old in night-time FAB wear, a 3.5 year old out of FAB wear, a relapse after PMR surgery and a newborn with a Trisomy syndrome who had casts applied. There was a general discussion about the results and long-term expectations.

Talks

Full programme of talks is available for download at www.steps.org.za. Top 10 talks/sessions according to the 45 evaluation forms received.

Talk/Session	Speaker
Practical Demonstration	ALL
An MRI Study of Clubfoot treated by Ponseti Technique	Dr Shafique Pirani
Uganda Sustainable Clubfoot Project	Dr Shafique Pirani
Technique Practice with Models and Instructors	ALL
Assessment of Clubfoot : Pirani Scoring method	Dr Shafique Pirani
A Parent's Perspective on Clubfoot	Karen Moss
The Ponseti Method : Why it works	Dr Naomi Davis
The FAB in Ponseti Clubfoot Management	Gavin Shnier
National Programme for Ponseti technique: Brazil	Dr Monica Nogueira
Results of the Ponseti Technique : Literature review	Dr Naomi Davis

RESULTS AND RESPONSE

We had an extremely positive response. Delegates were grateful for the seminar and requested follow-up with specialised sessions so more practitioners could master the technique and learn how to manufacture the low-cost brace (S-FAB). The delegates said Dr Pirani and Dr Nogueira's projects in Uganda and Brazil were inspiring and invaluable because the conditions are similar to South Africa.

Delegate feedback:

- "Excellent seminar bringing a revolutionary corrective method that has immense benefits for care of children's clubfoot deformity. Thanks for organising"
- "Very good initiative, "eye-opener" for a congenital foot problem with high incidence in South Africa, very encouraging worldwide results"
- "I gained a lot from the Ponseti method and I would like to implement it in my institution"
- "Very very exciting, I am very appreciative"
- "Please hold these sessions on regular basis for training"
- "I never knew about the Ponseti Technique and I feel very guilty about those I have treated with the wrong technique. I have hope that the future for those with clubfoot is in good hands"
- "Very informative seminar and hope it can be made more accessible to the whole of South Africa community. Wow!"
- "Please don't forget the rural, poor areas of South Africa! We need your support in terms of braces and supervision"
- "Very good seminar, impressed with the technique. I'm planning to start the practice in my area. Thank you."
- "It was the most interesting seminar I have ever attended, keep serving the community"
- "Excellent – menu accommodated people of all colour"
- "We are definitely going to change the way we work at the clinic"

STEPS Charity NPC

13 Chesterfield Road, Oranjezicht, Cape Town 8001

Tel: (021) 462 7357 -- Email: karen@steps.org.za -- Website: www.steps.org.za

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- “Wish to have the same implementation of Ponseti method as it is done in Uganda and Brazil.”
- “Thank you for the excellent idea of expanding this method to the rest of South Africa’s orthopaedic surgeons.”
- “Dr Pirani is a great inspiration!”
- “Very informative and encouraging”
- “I learned a lot. People were very warm.”
- “A wonderful team. Fabulous visitors from outside South Africa”
- “Thank you and congratulations to Karen Moss and to all the presenters”
- “Excellent and timely seminar. The faculty are all excellent”
- “We would like this type of seminar to be conducted frequently all over South Africa and try to involve every health discipline, i.e. doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, orthotists, occupational therapists, etc.”
- “I enjoyed it very much. Thanks to speakers and visitors”
- “Very enjoyable course.”

FOLLOW UP & FUTURE PLANS

There is a need for specialised workshops for plaster casting and FAB manufacture which is an intrinsic part for the success of the technique:

- Training of prosthetists and technicians at state hospital / clinic orthopaedic workshops in manufacture of cost-effective Steenbeek FAB for patients without medical insurance.
- Training of allied professionals; nurses, physiotherapists and casting technicians.

Angola is interested in holding training sessions for their doctors. Mozambique needs a training programme. Future Ponseti seminars would aim to incorporate programmes for these countries by Portuguese-speaking doctors.

OUR SUPPORTERS

We are grateful to our sponsors: SAVRALA, South African Airways, BSN Medical, Absa Bank, Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre, City Lodge, Pfizer, MMPA, Adcock Ingram, Avis Point to Point, Naomi Davis (Both Feet Forward), Missing Link, Hightide Print.

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**Karen Moss,
Executive Director STEPS Charity
16 August 2006**

STEPS Charity NPC
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