

Don't Just Pack Your Luggage When You Travel to an International Emergency Medicine Conference!

Gary Gaddis, MD FAAEM

One of the things for which our American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) is well-known is its involvement in international emergency medicine. I am one of a growing number of AAEM members who have had the opportunity to be an invited speaker at scientific meetings in countries that are not as resource-rich as the United States.

I recently gave three talks at the 2010 Winter Symposium of Emergency Medicine and Intensive Care in Karpacz, Poland. This meeting occurred March 2-6, 2010. The meeting chair was a leader many of us know, Professor Juliusz Jakubaszko, MD, of the Wroclaw Medical University and the Polish Society for Emergency Medicine (Polskie Towarzystwo Medycyny Ratunkowej). Because of his leadership, Poland has had an officially recognized specialty of emergency medicine for over 10 years. He is a man whom I greatly respect.

As Dr. Jakubaszko and I were emailing back-and-forth finalizing details of my talks in February, he made a request I had never received as a speaker. He asked that I bring along a few textbooks that could be placed into emergency departments in Poland. Poland is still emerging from its time under Soviet domination, and although it is by no means the world's poorest country, Poland is not as wealthy as some of its neighbors.

I surveyed my old texts and found, among other things, several recent versions of the Tintinalli study guide. I also came across a two-volume, always-up-to-date book about radiographs commonly obtained by emergency physicians and a copy of *Just the Facts*, the abridged version of the study guide assembled under the leadership of O. John Ma and David Cline.

When it came time to travel, the airline check-in personnel "looked the other way" when my bag checked in at 51.5 lb after I told the clerk the reason my suitcase was so heavy was to take textbooks to a resource-poor country. Between my checked and carry-on bags, I had over 45 pounds of books with me.

These books arrived in Poland without accruing any extra shipping charges. The books I brought now reside in emergency departments in Gdansk and Wroclaw where they will be used frequently as reference materials, rather than gathering dust on my shelves! (Irony: Judy Tintinalli is of Polish ancestry!).

Books are not the only valuable resource we accumulate without thought of what to do with them. I hate wasting soap and shampoo, and I take home what I have been given and what I don't use after hotel stays. I had acquired a sizable stash of hotel shampoo, conditioner, soap, body wash and sewing kits. I had been planning to give them to our hospital's social workers for distribution to the homeless at Christmas.

Recently, however, two of our nurses went to Haiti for post-earthquake relief. They planned ahead well, and I was told the small soaps and shampoos I had been saving would be valuable to them. After they returned, they told me these personal care products were at least as useful and valuable as the no-longer-used three person tent I gave these nurses.

So the bottom line is to ask, whenever you or a co-worker travels internationally for any reason, if any of the things that are sitting unused in your office or home may be useful at the travel destination. The particular beauty of taking recent (past 20 years), well-written and well-edited emergency medicine books with you as luggage on your international travels is that their content is probably still relevant and pretty accurate; having them is certainly better than having none, as is the case in many emergency departments of resource-poor nations. Further, no added charge needs to accrue in their shipping!

Welcome to our Newest 100% ED Groups

2010

BayCare Clinic LLP - Green Bay, WI

Campbell County Memorial Hospital - Gillette, WY

Drexel University - Philadelphia, PA

Dubuque Emergency Physicians - Dubuque, IA

Edward Hospital - Naperville, IL

Fort Atkinson Emergency Physicians (FAEP) - Nashotah, WI

Fredericksburg Emergency Medical Alliance, Inc.-

Fredericksburg, VA

Front Line Emergency Care Specialists - Lynwood, CA

Jesse Brown VA Hospital - Chicago, IL

Memorial Medical Center - Springfield, IL

OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center - Rockford, IL

Physician Now, LLC - Chesapeake, VA

Providence-Newberg (ESO) - Newberg, OR

Rocky Mountain Emergency Physicians Estes Park, CO

Salinas Valley Emergency Medicine Group - Salinas, CA

Santa Cruz Emergency Physicians (SCEP) - Capitola, CA

SCEMA - Pueblo, CO

Temple University Hospital - Philadelphia, PA

University of Louisville - Louisville, KY

West Jefferson EP Group - Marrero, LA

To sign your group up for 100% membership,
please email info@aaem.org

100%
ED
Group

AAEM instituted group memberships to allow hospitals/groups to pay for the memberships of all their physicians. Each hospital/group that participates in this program receives a 10% discount on membership dues. Full Voting membership in AAEM normally comes at a cost of \$365 per year, and Associate membership at \$250 per year. With this discount, you pay \$328.50 and \$225, respectively.

In order to take advantage of this discounted membership, please remember that all board certified and board eligible physicians at your hospital/group must be members. For this membership, we will invoice the group directly. If you are interested in this membership, please contact our membership manager at info@aaem.org or (800) 884-2236.