LATHAM, CAROLINE C., Director, Medical English Education Program, Okinawa Prefecture Northern Area Hospitals, JAPAN

Panel 3.4: Facilitating Cultural Flows and Exchanges

Lost in Translation?…Found in EMP in Okinawa!

In order to serve the growing international community in Okinawa, the prefectural government developed a plan to follow the lead of other Asian countries, such as the Philippines, in establishing a medical tourism program. For this dream to become a reality, it is necessary for doctors, nurses, medical technicians and other hospital staff to develop at least basic communicative competence skills in English because most patients from overseas will know English, either as a first or second language, but will invariably not know Japanese. Thus, the northern area hospitals, with Okinawa Prefecture Hokubu Hospital in the vanguard, established the first MEEP (Medical English Education Program) on April 1st, 2014.

During the preceding year, the presenter, (the MEEP Director) conducted in-depth needs assessment and intensive review and evaluation of existing materials available in EMP (English for Medical Purposes). Those relevant to the needs and appropriate for the skill levels of the personnel are being employed. A compendium of additional materials continues to be created according to the changing needs and improving skill levels. Instructional formats include role plays, case study presentations, USMLE practice, international conference presentation practice, individual tutorials, etc. The presenter will share examples of all materials and techniques currently employed in the MEEP.