

Purpose of the visit:

A 2+1 PTC course for doctors in Sucre.

Executive summary:

This was a 2+1 PTC course organized by the local anesthesia society (Sociedad Chuquisaqueña de Anestesiología) held at the Sucre College of Medicine's headquarters. Both the basic and instructor course were very successful, and the outlook for PTC in Bolivia is very good.

Key staff involved in planning and co-ordinating professional aspects of the visit

1. Dra. María Teresa Ambolumbet, Coordinator of PTC Bolivia, president of the Sociedad Chuquisaqueña de Anestesiología (and probable candidate for the presidency of the Bolivian Society of Anesthesia)
2. Dr. Jaime Campos, anesthesiologist and assistant coordinator of PTC Bolivia

Course Participants

There was a total of 16 participants in the basic course.
Ten of these were chosen to participate in the instructors' course.

Course Instructors

Local Instructors

	Last name	First Name	
1	Albis	Rubén	Anesthesiologist
2	Ambolumbet	Maria Teresa	Anesthesiologist
3	Bravo	Alvaro	Dental surgeon
4	Campos	Jaime	Anesthesiologist
5	López	Fabiola	Anesthesiologist
6	Nuñez	Miguel Angel	Anesthesiologist
7	Querejazu	Agustín	Anesthesiologist
8	Raya	Maria Eugenia	Dental surgeon
9	Rivera	Mirka	Anesthesiologist

Notes:

Dr. Rubén Albis (1, above) is an anesthesiologist from Potosí, where a PTC 2+1 will probably be organized within a few months. The trip from Potosí is a difficult 3 hours by car along winding, dangerous mountain roads. His presence in this course is commendable.

Instructors number 3 and 5 through 9 are new instructors, trained one year ago in the previous edition of this same course.

Dr. Miguel Angel Nuñez (6, above) usually works with the International Red Cross, based in Geneva. He routinely works in medical relief missions to hotspots throughout

the world, including most recently Syria. His experience working in trauma under precarious conditions is invaluable.

Visiting Instructors

Gonzalez, Oscar
López, Roberto
Sales, Luís

All three are experienced trainers and have contributed significantly to the growth of PTC in Bolivia.

Details of activities

Course activities on all three days started and finished relatively punctually. The typical schedule was used, with a minor difference (see contents of the PTC course, below).

The Sucre College of Medicine's headquarters is just right for PTC. The course was held in a classroom of very adequate size, with capacity for all participants and our usual "control center," a table at the back for instructors and support materials (computers, rosters, spare paper, etc.). Two of the three work stations were in the same room; the third was just outside in a wide, outdoor hall. Support staff and facilities are just one floor up. A large yard is just outside and was used for breaks and meals. There is an obvious financial advantage to having this venue rather than renting a hotel conference room!

Subsidiary activities

A final dinner held on the last day at Dr. Campos's beautiful home was a wonderful chance for everyone to relax and have a good time. Two guitars were put to good use by Dr. Gonzalez and Dr. Sales. Strong bonds of friendship were formed between course participants and instructors, and previously existing bonds were strengthened further. Perhaps even more important, the relationships of local instructors with each other were improved over the course of these three days. We firmly believe that the success of PTC in Latin America has been in great measure due to bonds of friendship. These should be encouraged and supported if PTC is to maintain and even increase its influence in Latin America.

Contents of the Primary Trauma Care Course

The course was held as per the usual schedule. The lecture on secondary survey was done after the first scenarios, which seems more sensible to our way of thinking.

Evaluation of the success and relevance of the visit

This was a profound learning experience for all 16 course participants as well as for the local instructors, especially the newest ones who were teaching their first PTC course.

The 16 participants are all young and in need of training. All felt that their needs were adequately addressed by PTC and their enthusiasm makes further courses very likely for the near future. Dr. Rubén Albis, in particular, will now be seconded by Dr. Ana Morales, a slightly younger (but experienced) anesthesiologist in his home city of Potosi, and hopes to organize a course in August. Dr. Roxana is from Uyuni, another city not very far from Potosi, and will also lend support.

The visiting instructors contributed significantly to the successful training of the new instructors as well as that of the basic course participants.

The visit was also relevant and useful in helping to bring the local coordinators together. Dr. Ambolumbet and Dr. Campos are very different in personality and overall attitudes, but share their capacity for hard work and proven commitment to PTC. Dr. Campos is all horsepower, and Dr. Ambolumbet provides steering and braking. Dr. Campos communicates very well with younger colleagues and conveys enthusiasm on the same wavelength. Dr. Ambolumbet has vital political connections with the society of anesthesia.

Primary Trauma Care Course Critique Forms

Nearly all forms gave top marks to all activities, including lectures and work stations. As usual, most participants wanted more time for the work stations and moulages.

Summary of our take on Bolivia:

Sucre has established itself as the PTC capital in Bolivia. Dra. Teresa Ambolumbet and Dr. Jaime Campos are both key players and will contribute enormously to the continuing success of PTC. They have trained some enthusiastic supporters and are definitely on their way to making PTC grow in their country. The outlook is good for more courses in neighboring cities such as Potosi and Uyuni in the near future. Santa Cruz and other big cities will follow.

At some point in the not too distant future, a refresher course for instructors could be very useful, to help boost their confidence and encourage them to organize courses in more locations throughout the country.

CONCLUSIONS:

In the overall chart of PTC activities in Latin America, Bolivia is in the “SUCCESS” column. Although it got off to a bumpy start, it is now on the right track. PTC Latin America must continue to support Bolivia in its growth.