

# GLOBAL LAWYERS & PHYSICIANS

## *2002 ANNUAL REPORT*

### PROJECTS

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#### *BOSTON CENTER FOR REFUGEE HEALTH & HUMAN RIGHTS*

**The Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights** (BCRHHR) at Boston Medical Center, formed at the initiative of GLP, endeavors to fill a serious gap in the health care safety net in New England by reaching out to survivors of torture, those seeking asylum, and traumatized refugees. The BCRHHR was also formed to serve as a focus for GLP advocacy on issues of refugee torture and humanitarian law. These high-risk populations often suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and/or depression and typically need, but rarely receive, a complex set of medical and psychosocial services in order to successfully integrate into society. The BCRHHR currently provides a broad range of medical, legal, psychological and social services to survivors of torture and related trauma arriving in Boston and throughout the region. In this manner, the BCRHHR involves the expertise of several clinical departments at Boston Medical Center including Psychiatry, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, and Primary Care. The BCRHHR also represents a collaboration of the Boston University Schools of Medicine, Public Health, Law, and Dentistry. In 2002, approximately 204 patients were seen at the BCRHHR from 34 different countries including Afghanistan, Bosnia, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tibet and Uganda.

**In** June 2002, GLP sponsored a major conference drawing people from all over New England. The conference, entitled **“Caring for Survivors of Torture and Refugee Trauma: A Multi-disciplinary Workshop”** was supported by a generous donation from the Reebok Human Rights Foundation.

**A** web-based course entitled **Caring for Refugees and Survivors of Torture** was created, and has been used by professionals around the world for training and teaching purposes, including in Norway, Burma, Australia, and by the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT). The course can be found at [www.glphr.org](http://www.glphr.org). The BCRHHR staff has published many articles this year, including one in JAMA, and has also made presentations at the annual meeting of both the Society of General Internal Medicine and the American Public Health Association. The BCRHHR has also conducted in-service training sessions for residents at Boston Medical Center, as well as training for other professionals in collaboration with Physicians for Human Rights, American Public Health Association and Francois Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights (FXB). Additional information about the BCRHHR can be found at [www.glphr.org/refugee](http://www.glphr.org/refugee).

## *Projects Continued*

### ***UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF PATIENT RIGHTS***

**I**n 2002, an international committee was established to develop a "Universal Declaration of Patient Rights." This committee will examine how to encourage recognition of the rights of patients as a necessary component of basic human rights both in law and in practice. The committee will use established models which support patient rights (i.e. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights) to develop a broader statement for use by other countries including the development of more detailed guidelines for regions, countries or organizations that wish to implement particular patient rights. Wendy Mariner is chairing this committee.

### ***HUMAN RIGHTS AND HEALTH NETWORK***

**GLP's** major goal is to facilitate cooperative work on human rights by lawyers and physicians, with a primary focus on health. GLP established the **Consortium for Health & Human Rights** in 1998 to enable professionals to more easily and effectively combine their skills and influence to promote the human rights and health agenda. The Consortium consists of GLP, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), the Francois Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights (FXB), and the New England branch of Amnesty International. Activities of the Consortium, including conferences, curriculum development and support for student organizing, can be found at the Consortium's website ([www.healthandhumanrights.org](http://www.healthandhumanrights.org)) which is maintained by Physicians for Human Rights.

### ***HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS VISITING ACTIVISTS***

**Marie** Norredam, MD, a physician from Denmark, is working with GLP and the BCRHHR on the epidemiology and delivery systems for caring for survivors of torture and refugee trauma. Doris Kurschner, a lawyer from Germany, is completing an internship with GLP. She is examining international health care systems, doing a comparative analysis of patient rights systems in Europe and researching the German health insurance system and its reform.

## **CONFERENCES AND COURSES**

**GLP** held its fourth annual conference on Health and Human Rights, on January 25, 2002, at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. This year's conference was entitled **HIV/AIDS in Africa: Taking Action**. The conference, cosponsored by the University's African Studies Center, the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and Physicians for Human Rights, and chaired by Evelyn Shuster, brought together academics, activists, and drug industry representatives to discuss the meaning of the international right to health and its usefulness as a tool for making AIDS prevention and treatment available in Africa. The symposium culminated in the development of a "Philadelphia Declaration" in defense of health and human rights and the dignity of people living with HIV/AIDS in Africa.

## *Conferences and Courses Continued*

**F**or the past seven years George Annas and Michael Grodin have offered a **Human Rights and Health** course at the Boston University School of Public Health. Every other year they also offer the course at BU Law School. GLP continues to encourage others to incorporate health and human rights into their curricula. The Boston University Health and Human Rights syllabus is available on request.

**I**n June 2002, GLP cosponsored a three-day intensive continuing education course on **Health & Human Rights** with FXB. The course was attended by people from 22 countries and many attending were provided with scholarships. George Annas, Michael Grodin, Stephen Marks, Sofia Gruskin and Monica Onyango taught this course. It will be offered for the fourth time in June 2003. For information: [www.hsph.harvard.edu/ccpe/programs/ICHH.shtml](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/ccpe/programs/ICHH.shtml).

**O**n January 17-18, 2002, GLP was one of the participating members of a national **Health and Human Rights Curriculum Project** held at the Harvard School of Public Health. The workshop brought together thirty specialists in public health practice and health professions educators with the explicit goal of providing advice on development of human rights education for students and practitioners of public health, medicine and nursing. The conference was co-sponsored by the American Public Health Association's International Human Rights Committee and FXB.

**A**t the invitation of the Attorney General of Mexico, Michael Grodin, Alejandro Moreno and an international group of physicians spent a week in Mexico in October 2002 training 65 forensic physicians and district attorneys on the effective **documentation of torture and ill treatment in Mexican prisons and jails**. They hope to use this training model in other countries. Observers from the UN and several NGOs were present to document the process. These observers will monitor to ensure that documentation and prosecutions occur and that the physicians are safe from reprisals. Dr. Grodin expects to return to Mexico to do further training on the recognition and treatment of survivors of torture.

**GLP** and the Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights organized several trainings for physicians, psychologists and social workers on health and human rights for survivors of torture and refugee trauma.

## **ADVOCACY**

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**I**n December 2001, the UN General Assembly voted to create a working group within the framework of the Sixth Committee (legal) to define a negotiating mandate for a **Convention to Outlaw Human Reproductive Cloning** (Resolution 56/93). That working group met twice in 2002, once in February and once in September. At both meetings Global Lawyers and Physicians, in conjunction with the Center for Genetics and Society, led **briefing sessions for the delegates** at the United Nations headquarters in New York. George Annas was quoted in *USA Today* the day before the September briefing on the proposed treaty: "This is extraordinarily

## *Advocacy Continued*

significant, especially since the UN has never before had any kind of a treaty covering a bioethics issue. (Sept. 23, 2002, 3A) At this point debate has been postponed for a year (until September 2003) because of a deadlock among the countries over whether to outlaw both making-medicine (research) cloning and making-baby (reproductive) cloning, or to outlaw only the latter. For more details on the debate see articles in the publications section of this report, and see our website for an up-to-date listing of national laws on this topic developed by Rosario Isasi, GLP's 2001-2002 Health Law & Bioethics fellow and lawyer from Peru.

**During** 2002 GLP sponsored visitors from many countries. Several Tibetan monks visited the BCRHHR to discuss challenges relating to implementing human rights and how the health of the Tibetan community is impacted. Additionally, a contingent of thirteen psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers from the West Bank in Gaza visited GLP and toured the BCRHHR in a US State Department trip to learn about the care of refugees and trauma survivors.

**GLP** sponsors the **Health & Human Rights Student Caucus** at the Boston University School of Public Health, which as a student composed and led organization, dedicates their efforts to exploring and supporting health and human rights concerns through education, collaboration and action in the local, national and global milieu. Examples of Caucus activities in 2002 include hosting the first annual "Round the Table: Conversations on Public Health and Human Rights" (February 15, 2002) with distinguished guest Dr. Moncef Marzouki, Professor of Public Health, physician, and one of Tunisia's leading human rights defenders; sponsoring a clothing drive for the Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights in which over 40 large bags of gently used winter clothing was amassed in donations from the community; co-sponsoring "Terrorism and Public Health," a talk by Barry Levy (December 2, 2002) made possible by Health Community Against the War. For 2002 International Human Rights Day, the HHR Caucus focused on the connection between war, health and human rights. The caucus manned a table in the medical school lobby, distributing informational materials about the health consequences of war, ways in which human rights are violated during war times, and the paradigm of human rights as a tool for action.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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### ***HEALTH AND HUMAN RIGHTS***

**George** Annas and Michael Grodin, together with Sofia Gruskin and Stephen Marks, are in the process of editing a 2<sup>nd</sup> Health and Human Rights volume entitled **Health and Human Rights: Emerging Issues**. This text will focus on successful methodologies and strategies for implementing the health and human rights paradigm. Anticipated publication date will be in 2004 by Routledge.

*Publications Continued*

***PHYSICIANS AND THE DEATH PENALTY***

Annas, George J, **Moral Progress, Mental Retardation, and the Death Penalty**, N Engl J Med 2002; 347: 1814-1818.

LeGraw, Joan & Grodin, Michael A, **Health Professionals and Lethal Injection Execution in the United States**, Human Rights Quarterly 2002; 24(2): 382-423.

***THE PROPOSED CLONING TREATY***

Annas, George J, Andrews, Lori & Isasi, Rosario, **Protecting the Endangered Human: Toward an International Treaty Prohibiting Cloning and Inheritable Alterations**, 28 Am J Law & Med 151-178 (2002).

Annas, George J, **Cell Division**, Boston Globe, April 21, 2002, D1-2.

Annas George J, **Cloning and the U.S. Congress**, N Engl J Med 2002; 346: 1599-1602

***BIOTERRORISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS***

Annas, George J, **Bioterrorism, Public Health and Civil Liberties**, N Engl J Med 2002; 346: 1337-1342.

Annas, George J, **Bioterrorism, Public Health and Human Rights**, Health Affairs 21: 94-97 (Nov. 2002)

***HIV/AIDS***

Annas, George J, Letter, **HIV/AIDS in Africa**, Lancet 2002; 360:1786-7.

***TORTURE AND THE TREATMENT OF SURVIVORS***

Moreno, Alejandro & Grodin, Michael A, **Torture and its Neurological Sequelae**, Spinal Cord 2002; 40(5):213-223.

You can email GLP at [glp@bu.edu](mailto:glp@bu.edu) and visit our website anytime for ongoing activities at [www.glphr.org](http://www.glphr.org).

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