

## Introducing ALSO in Nicaragua

In December 2008, the ALSO Advisory Board enthusiastically and unanimously approved the proposal submitted by the Nicaraguan Association of Family Medicine to introduce ALSO to Nicaragua. This proposal was presented at the ALSO International Advisory Board Meeting in January of 2009 by the Vice- President of the Nicaraguan Association of Family Medicine, Roberto de Jesus Martinez Cabrera, M.D. with assistance of Dr. Sonia M. Acevedo Espinoza, Family Medicine physician in El Paso Texas, who is originally from Nicaragua and has assisted in the application process and coordination of the start up ALSO courses in Nicaragua.

After almost a year of planning and coordination, on November 30<sup>th</sup> through December 5<sup>th</sup> 2009, ALSO will be introduced to Nicaragua with the use of the standard model for start-up ALSO courses. An international team will travel to Managua, Nicaragua to teach a two-day provider course to approximately 35 Nicaraguan providers. Those who successfully complete this course and are interested in becoming ALSO instructors will also participate in a one-day instructor course taught by the international instructors. The Nicaraguan instructor candidates will then teach a second ALSO provider course in Juigalpa, Nicaragua to a second group of Nicaraguan providers under the supervision of the international team; Fulfilling all the requirements needed to obtain certification to hold their own ALSO courses in the future through the Nicaraguan Association of Family Medicine. They will continue to train Family Medicine physicians, residents, Nurse Midwives, Physicians in social services, Interns and other OB providers in ALSO in future courses.

Plans to start ALSO courses in Nicaragua have been discussed and have the support of the authorities and OB/GYN physician of the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua (UNAN) – Managua. OB/GYN physicians, family medicine physicians, general practitioners and OB nurses will participate in the start up courses to continue to encourage collaboration between specialties and the multidisciplinary management of patients. The current Dean of the Department of Medical Sciences of UNAN- Managua, Dr. Freddy Meynard Mejia, has guaranteed the complete support from the university to host the start up course and future courses in ALSO. The first provider course and instructor course will be held in Managua at the facilities' of UNAN-Managua.

The international team and instructor candidates will then travel to The Hospital Asunción Juigalpa that is approximately 140 KM from Managua for the second ALSO provider course. The Hospital Asunción, Juigalpa trains Nurse Midwives and interns and there for it is and ideal location to hold ALSO courses.

In 2004 the National Maternal Mortality in Nicaragua was 88.6 for every 100,000 live births. ALSO helps health care providers develop and maintain the knowledge and skills they need to effectively manage potential emergencies during the perinatal period and therefore has great potential in contributing to reduce Maternal/Infant mortality in Nicaragua.

You can read updates on the ALSO courses in Nicaragua and see pictures from the course that will be posted at the ALSO-Nicaragua web site: [www.also-nicaragua.org](http://www.also-nicaragua.org)

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