

GLOBAL LAWYERS AND PHYSICIANS

2001 ANNUAL REPORT

Projects

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

Boston Center for Refugee Health & Human Rights (BCRHHR)

The Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights 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. 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 Center also represents a collaboration of the Boston University Schools of Medicine, Public Health, Law and Dentistry.

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 (and additional information about the Center) can be found at <http://www.glphr.org/>. The Center 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 Center 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 Center can be found at <http://www.glphr.org>

Conferences and Courses

GLP's major 2001 conference **Beyond Cloning: Protecting Humanity from Species-Altering Procedures** was held on September 21-22 in Boston. The conference was cosponsored by the Center for Genetics and Society, Illinois Institute of Technology and the Ethics, Law and Biotechnology Society of Harvard Law School, and brought together academics, scientists and activists to discuss policies to prevent cloning and the alteration of the human species through genetic engineering. The conference also began the work of drafting treaty language to prohibit human cloning and inheritable alterations.

On April 20-22, 2001 GLP cosponsored with the University Iowa Center for Human Rights, Global Health Studies and FXB, the **Global Assembly: Advancing the Human Right to Health**, a gathering of US and foreign health care providers, legal professionals, and community activists together with faculty and students from the University of Iowa and other US-based academic institutions. An important document resulting from the Global Assembly was **The Iowa City Appeal on Advancing the Human Right to Health**.
<http://www.glphr.org/APPEAL.pdf>

GLP helped assure that "Health and Human Rights" was one of four major tracks in the **Health Law Teachers Conference** held in June 2001 at Boston University Law School. The conference was co-sponsored by the Boston University Law School and the School of Public Health.

GLP held its third annual conference on Health and Human Rights, on February 2, 2001, in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania. This year's conference was entitled **HIV/AIDS in Africa: The Critical Link Between Human Rights And Health**. The conference, cosponsored by the University's African Studies Center, the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and Physicians for Human Rights, brought together academics, activists, and drug industry representatives to discuss the development of a common strategy to make AIDS treatment drugs available in Africa. The fourth Annual Conference was held in January 2002 and resulted in **The Philadelphia Declaration**.

In September 2001 GLP cosponsored with the American Society of Law, Medicine and Ethics, Temple University, Beasley School of Law, UNAIDS, WHO, and FXB, the International Conference Honoring Jonathan Mann, **Health, Law and Human Rights: Exploring the Connections**. The three-day conference examined key empirical questions about the Health and Human Rights movement and its conceptual foundations.

For the past six 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 a course in this subject at BU Law School. GLP continues to encourage and help others begin

incorporating health and human rights into their curricula. They will provide copies of the Health and Human Rights syllabus to those interested and serve in a consultative manner to professors interested in starting a course.

In June 2001, GLP cosponsored a three-day intensive continuing education course on **Health & Human Rights** with FXB. The course was attended by people from 17 countries and many attending were provided with scholarships. George Annas, Michael Grodin, Stephen Marks, Sofia Gruskin and Jennifer Leaning taught this course. It will be offered for the third time in June 2002.

On 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 of public health, medicine and nursing and for practitioners. The conference was co-sponsored by the American Public Health Association International Human Rights Committee and FXB.

Advocacy

GLP's major advocacy campaign this year focused on drafting an international treaty to ban human reproductive cloning and inheritable genetic alterations. Rosario Isasi, the Health Law & Bioethics fellow and lawyer from Peru, developed a comprehensive database on global policies on this subject (www.glphr.org) which has been used for teaching and research purposes around the world, including Peru, Germany, Canada and United Kingdom.

Among GLP advocacy campaigns during 2001 were promoting the Humanitarian Statement of Concern addressed to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; and promoting a **Call for a Ban on the Genetic Alteration of Pathogens for Destructive Purposes**, and for the support of a Protocol to the Biological Weapons Convention, addressed to the States Parties to the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention. GLP also helped bring to the attention of policymakers in the US human rights concerns on the issues of the International Criminal Court, the use of torture against detainees by law enforcement officials, the Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act, the Landmine Elimination and Victims Assistance Act, physician involvement in lethal executions, and slavery in Sudan.

A web-based database on **Human Rights Education and Advocacy** was created; it provides resources and materials on human rights education directories, treaty collection, international law, human rights reports, regional resources and international organizations, among others. The GLP database, **Health and Human Rights**, was singled out as the "Health and Human Rights website of the Month" by FXB.

The British Medical Association's publication **The Medical Profession and Human Rights: A Handbook for a Changing Agenda**, Zed Books Ltd., NY, 2001, highlighted GLP as the type of

organization it ì strongly advocatesî to develop ì joint strategies and alliances in human rightsî and as an ì international example of a cooperative venture between professionals and lawyers.î (pp. 516-517)

GLP cosigned an Amicus Curiae brief to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, District of California, in the case *Conant v. Jurith*, against the government's attempt to punish physicians for recommending that some patients consider medical marijuana as a treatment, in violation of the First Amendment's protection of physician-patient speech.

GLP cosigned an Amicus Curiae brief to United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, South Carolina, in the case of *Ferguson v. City of Charleston, South Carolina*, arguing that the Department of Social Services of Charlestown County's and the Medical Ethics Committees of the Medical University of South Carolina, policy of drug testing obstetrics patients and sharing the result with the police violated the minimal standards of informed consent and constitutional due process.

The GLP student's chapter, the **Health and Human Rights Student's Caucus**, is located at the Boston University School of Public Health campus. Its role is to promote and educate their community on the important link between health and human rights. They actively participate in organizing events and programs throughout the year. Examples of their activities during 2001 include celebrating Human Rights Day, and sponsoring Dr. Elia Awwad's Lecture ì Health Care Delivery and Psychosocial Health in the Palestinian Authority.î

You can email GLP at glp@bu.edu and visit our website anytime for ongoing activities at www.glphr.org.