

# CHERNOBYL CHILDREN'S PROJECT (UK)

## ПОДДЕРЖКА ДЕТЯМ БЕЛАРУСИ

### Training Programmes and Educational visits

In **1998** the Head of Special Needs Education in Gomel, Elena Voloshinenko, came on a visit to the UK, with the Directors of two disability centre. We have maintained a relationship with Elena ever since and she now works for our partner organisation in Gomel.



In **1998** we also sent a Macmillan Nurse to a Conference in Minsk. We were thinking at that time of setting up a Macmillan type programme in Belarus, but decided instead to support and extend Home Hospice care. The following year we sent three nurses and social workers from Macmillan and CLIC Sargent to



Belarus to give training and advice, and followed this with a visit to the UK for Hospice Nurses.

In **1999** we organised visits to the UK for Social Protection and Education staff in Rogachev and Gomel, and later in the year for the Directors of four orphanages and special schools.

These early visits were so useful in passing on ideas and methods of working, that they became a regular feature of our work.

In January **2000** Jean Holt visited Belarus and was asked by the Ministry of Education to set up a training programme on Fostering. Jean had been the manager of a children's home and then worked in fostering, and was used to delivering training. She ran her first training programme in Gomel in the spring of that year, and then was in Belarus two or three times a year for the next fifteen years delivering training programmes in Preparing and Supporting Foster Families, Management, Preparing for Change, Assessment and Planning, Child Centred Care and many aspects of child care and development.

We received significant funding from the Department for International Development in the early years for our training programmes, until they decided to switch most of their funding to Africa.

Jean recruited many other social workers, mostly from Yorkshire, to training with her and share their expertise. In **2002** we ran a publicity campaign in Gomel about foster care which was very successful. Some of the early management training was carried out



with Geoff Wright, who then went to work for

UNICEF in many other former Soviet countries, before returning to run our training programmes when Jean retired.



Most of the orphanages in Gomel region have now closed down and the children have moved into foster families or small family type homes.

In March **2001** we brought the Directors of Education and Social protection for Gomel region, and an even more senior member of the Regional Executive Committee on a visit to the UK to look at care and education for children with disabilities. This was an invaluable visit. Sokorev, the Head of Social protection, was very supportive of every one of our projects for the next ten years until he retired, and did all he could to improve life for people with disabilities in his region.

In spring **2002** we brought four groups to the UK on Educational visits! Staff from the Regional Rehabilitation Centre in Gomel visited many special schools and met early intervention specialists; staff from the Home for Abandoned babies look at early years care; representatives of the Health and Social Protection Ministries in Minsk and senior members of the Education and Social protection departments in Gomel came on visits to look at all aspects of care, education and work opportunities for people with disabilities.

It was this last visit which led to the setting up of the Mayflower centre.

Also in **2002** a training in symbol communication was delivered at School No 5 in Gomel and a physiotherapist gave training and advice at Zhuravichi and several special schools. They were both involved the following year in delivering training at the Republican Rehabilitation Centre in Minsk.

In April **2003** we took three disability specialists to visit Zhuravichi and a number of special schools to give us advice and guidance about setting up the Mayflower Respite Care Centre and they took part in a round table discussion with many local professionals in Gomel.

The Director of Health for Gomel region visited the UK with the Chief Doctors of the two main regional hospitals, visiting many hospitals and special schools.



In **2004** we brought the Director of Special School No 5 on a visit, prior to our setting up of a wheelchair class in the school



The Manager of the Mayflower Centre and a colleague came to spend time at respite centres in the UK. Pat Marsh Manager, of Woodlands Respite Centre at the Together Trust, hosted most of this visit and subsequently went four times to Belarus to give training and advice at Mayflower.

As a result of the setting up the Mayflower centre, we were asked to organise a visit for senior officials of the Education, Social protection and Finance Ministries in the autumn of **2005**.

In **2006** we took a Diabetic doctor to Gomel to give training and advice to the Diabetic Association. His visit was followed up with the establishment of a small research programme at a nearby hospital.

There was a visit to the UK by Hospice staff from Gomel, Minsk and Pinsk and training visits were made to Minsk and Gomel by a nurse and a Palliative Care doctor.

Visits to the UK also included psychologists from Gomel University and the Advanced Learning Institute; senior adoption specialist; and the Chief Children's Doctor at the Psychiatric Hospital.

Foster care training during this year covered Assessing Foster Carers; Training the Trainers; Planning in Child Care; and Management for Directors of Institutions. And training also took place in the Children's Department of the Psychiatric Hospital.

In **2007** we brought a doctor from the Baby Home and nurses from Zhuravichi and Rechitsa Boarding home on a visit to look at special schools and hospice care.

In the autumn John Costello, our Palliative Care Consultant, delivered training in Minsk and Gomel and the Chief Doctor of the Gomel Regional Psychiatric Hospital came on a visit to the UK.

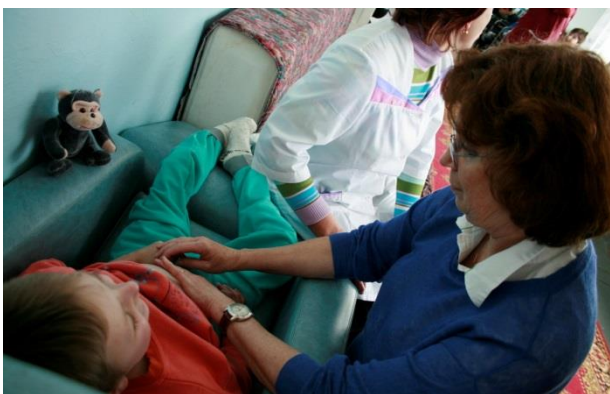


In **2008** we began a three year leaving care programme with an Italian charity funding the salaries of staff working with children in institutions and we provided the training.





In **2009** Dr. Rosemary Newton followed up on the first visit she had made the previous year with a seminar for neurologists in Gomel and consultations with parents. This visit resulted in the setting up of two pilot projects aimed at increasing rescue medication for epilepsy to Belarus.



In **2010** training and visits for the Leaving Care and Epilepsy projects took place.

The directors of Zhuravichi and Rechitsa Boarding Homes came on an educational visits to special schools in the North West.

We also brought representatives of the Health, Social Protection and Education Ministries on a visit aimed at improving their support for children with disabilities.

In March **2011** we brought three palliative care doctors on a visit to hospices in the UK. And in June we brought a psychologist from the Children's Cancer Hospital in Minsk.

In April a National Seminar was held at Ulookavye Orphanage where our Leaving Care project had been taking place over the last three years.

The Medical Director of the Belarusian Children's Hospice, Natallia Savva, came on a visit to the UK and began a three year distance learning course in Palliative Medicine at Cardiff University, for which we had received a grant from the Raisa Gorbachev Foundation.

Jean was joined by Eric Shedlow from Leeds in delivering training in many aspects of child care and development.

In **2012** our Gomel Hospice Doctor, Irina Kalmanovich, came to spend a week shadowing staff at Martin House Hospice, in Yorkshire.

Representatives of the National organisation of Parents with disabled children came on an educational visit.

In **2008** we took teachers and a consultant paediatrician to Gomel to give advice about our work with children with disabilities.

Several trainings took place in the Leaving care programme and the 'mentors' working on the project came on an educational visit to Yorkshire, organised by Jean Holt.



In April training was delivered in Gomel on the Webster Stratton Parenting Programme. The training was given to hospital and polyclinic staff and was subsequently passed on by them to many other professionals.

Marie Owen, our Consultant Paediatrician made her second visit to Gomel to give us further advice about care and support for children with disabilities.





Geoff Wright visited Gomel in the spring to deliver training and make plans for a new project.



John Costello delivered palliative care seminars in Minsk; Rosemary Newton visited Gomel to work with families involved in the rescue Medication Project; Social workers from Stockport visited Gomel and took part in a round table discussion in Minsk with the Ministry of Social Protection about moving people out of institutions

Representatives of the Education, Social Protection and Health Ministries came on a visit to Manchester.

In January **2013** leading representatives of the Institute in Minsk which provides advanced training for social workers came on a visit to the UK, in preparation for a training programme which Geoff Wright and others would deliver over the next few years. The idea is to upgrade Belarusian social workers and psychologists to have more of the skills of a western Social Worker.

Simon Saxton and Jacqui Raynor made two visits to Gomel to deliver training in Restorative Justice.

In March we organised a visit for the Deputy Minister of Social Protection and representatives of Disability NGOs in Minsk. Alexander Rumak had visited our two family homes and was interested in setting up new forms of living for young people in institutions, so this was what the visit focused on.



In June, Cleft Surgeon Victoria Beale hosted two facial surgeons from Minsk for a whole week at Manchester Children's Hospital, showing them every aspects of cleft palate and lip surgery and after care.

Training was given in the preparation of temporary foster families in Gomel by Sue Keidan and Alison

Tribe, in the hope that less children will enter the baby Home in Gomel.

Erin King worked with Geoff wright to deliver further training in Social Work in Minsk.

A group of disability specialists visited Minsk and Gomel, including Maggie Thomson, former Head of Bridge College in Manchester and Dr. Tom Fryers. His trust, 'Action for Disability' has provided wonderful financial support for CCP over the last five years!

*The British Ambassador organised a dinner so the visitors could meet representatives from several ministries.*





In June **2014** a visit to Yorkshire to look at Restorative Justice was organised by Simon Saxton for senior Juvenile Justice officials in Gomel.

Training was delivered in Gomel in finding and training foster families for children with disabilities; and further training was delivered in the Social Work development project in Minsk and Gomel.

In **2015** and the following year Geoff Wright gave training in Online Safety for school children, as part of a project supported by the British Embassy.



In **2016** we delivered training in Gomel in working with autistic children, and brought senior health and Education department officials from Gomel to learn more about the needs of children on the spectrum.

In July we brought the Director of Gomel Regional Diagnostic and Rehabilitation centre to spend the week at Pictor School and Inscape School.

Speech and language therapists from Inscape House visited Belarus to deliver training in the autumn and a training was also delivered in working with young people with drug problems.

In December three psychiatrists from Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust visited Gomel to advise on our Mental Health Project.

In early **2017** the Deputy Head of Special School No 5 in Gomel came to spend the week with Pictor and Inscape House Schools, and to visit the Seashell Trust's Royal school.

Gomel Regional Health Director came on a visit with the Chief Doctor of the Psychiatric Hospital to look at autism, and mental health care in the community.

In the autumn Early Intervention specialists from Polyclinic 19 in Minsk came on a visit to Manchester.



In February 2018 the Head of Inclusive Education in Belarus came to look at Special Needs Education and integration.

In the spring we hosted a visit from the Directors of education and Social Protection in Gomel, and their boss on the Executive Committee, to look at all aspects of care, education and support for families with children with disabilities.



In the autumn a visit was organised to look at all aspects of pregnancy, delivery and post natal care, in Manchester and Birmingham.

