

IcFEM Dreamland Mission Hospital (DMH) Newsletter July – September 2014

As we sit and write this letter we are surrounded by the noise of children awaiting immunisations, a plaster saw removing casts and parents of children awaiting surgery all talking to each other. It reminds us of how far the hospital has come over the last few years.

This quarter has seen further new surgical services open at DMH. Over the recent months we became a formal Smile Train partner, allowing us to operate on cleft lip and palate patients and be repaid for the costs by Smile Train. There are no facilities offering cleft lip surgery in this region so it has been a huge blessing to the community. In September we welcomed our first Smile Train team headed up by Dr Tony Giles and his wife Ann. Over a period of two and a half weeks the team completed surgery on 33 children, giving them back the gift of being able to feed, laugh and smile. Some babies were so tiny that they had to go on a feeding programme before they could safely have surgery. Some 1 year old children weighed the same as a healthy 2 or 3 month old baby. Other children were still too underweight for surgery, and have been put on a monitored feeding programme by the DMH staff. For example an 11 month old came weighing only 3.8Kg and has been started on a feeding programme until the team's next visit.



LEFT: Becky with the Smile Train Team

RIGHT: Children and parents on the ward

Those receiving surgery were truly delighted with the results. One such child was John who was brought to DMH by a member of an IcFEM local unit. He was being looked after by his cousin who was 12 years old herself. John had spent 6 years living with a bilateral cleft lip defect, and this operation has changed his life forever.



The DMH theatre team lead by Agnes did an excellent job working with the Smile Train and thanks to them DMH is aiming to continue this partnership, with specialised surgery being planned every 6 months. The hospital is slowly become known as the place to come for children's corrective surgery, with the surgical orthopaedic clinics now happening on a monthly basis. Thanks to donor funding DMH is now operating on 8-12 orthopaedic children a month and this week will pass the milestone of 100 corrective operations performed since April . Dr Rotich continues to come from Eldoret for 3-4 days at a time to perform the surgery, with Mellan following up the patients, making splints and allowing the children to stand up and walk for the first time. In the last newsletter we told the story of Samuel who had surgery on his left foot, he had been living with the disability for years, and was delighted to see his foot straight in a cast. In August Samuel had his cast removed, and like other children who had received surgery at the same time ,took his first steps in the grounds of DMH. Samuel was particularly delighted with his new trainers that flash as he walks! He was nervous for his first few steps but within a matter of minutes he was kicking a ball and trying to run! Samuel will be followed up in the clinic regularly and will have new splints made as he grows. In time he will no longer need the splints and will be free to wear whatever shoes he likes, although he says he always wants shoes that flash!



Samuel with his new shoes and new straight foot!

It is a delight to see the new facilities at DMH being used this way. The difference that this funding has made to these children's lives is huge and we hope that by this time next year we will have done many more operations like these.

Kiprop's return from his studies has meant that the eye service has continued to grow with over 100 cataract surgeries being done since July and the eye clinics busy every day. Cecilia and Kiprop continue to run both the eye screening market service and the eye clinics and surgery. Kiprop has had confirmation that he has passed his final exams, and so is now operating without supervision. This also means that emergency cases no longer need to be referred and can be treated immediately at DMH. The eye service has been a huge asset to the community.

The laboratory services have also grown with the new facilities. Charles and Bonnie are now regularly being referred patients for blood transfusion and clinical chemistry and they have

also started to provide a 24/7 on-call cover to ensure that emergencies can be catered for at night. Alongside lab, DMH is growing its HIV service with a small cohort of HIV positive patients able to receive their drugs at DMH. The drugs are provided free, but further funding is still required for essential blood tests to be carried out so that these patients don't incur any costs.

Other services at DMH continue to run well, and the new in patient wards and outpatient services are all constantly in use, with 50-100 patients a month under NHIF. Services run smoothly using the networked hospital information system, another blessing. Staff numbers have increased to cope with the increase in workload, including an additional pharmacist, cashier, nurse aids, nurses and clinical officer with nearly 60 staff now employed at DMH. Each and every member of staff is essential to the continued growth of the hospital and the management are extremely grateful for the staff sponsorship that makes it possible for us to provide these services. Our DMH hospital team photo includes Dr Jane who visited with Dr Simon and were thrilled to see the hospital, theatre and wards so full and busy.



In the last newsletter we highlighted the need for a doctor. Funding for this has been achieved and the team have interviewed local doctors this September. It is likely that the hospital will run on a rota of doctors covering a 24/7 shift pattern. We hope that in the next few weeks this will be confirmed and other more complex services can start. The aim is to have theatre running everyday by November, offering a comprehensive service to local patients.

We are extremely grateful for the support that you give to DMH and this community. The hospital has developed and grown dramatically over the last year. There is still a need for improved laboratory services, a new kitchen and further accommodation and if you would like to help support DMH further in any other way please do contact us.

dreamlandhsopital@icfem.org. You can also visit www.justgiving.com/lcFEMDMH or Text IDMH99 followed by the amount (eg £10) to 70070

If your church, company, women's group or anyone else would like a talk or update on the work of the hospital please feel free to contact Becky at dreamlandhsopital@icfem.org.

Thank you again for all your support and do feel free to pass this newsletter on to other interested parties.

Becky Nightingale and Jane Daniell (On behalf of all the DMH management with Sister Margaret, RCO Kiprop, and Sister Jael)