

Ethiopia Link

Hossana and Yirga Alem hospitals

our link hospitals in Ethiopia

March 2010 Newsletter

Water! *The story so far:* Hossana has quite a decent rainfall in the two rainy seasons – big and little. But in between these, it can still get very dry.

The 200 bed 4 storey hospital was built without a water tower, and with a poor supply from the town. The pump by the hospital storage tank often breaks as it is not sufficient to pump to the hospital wards and compound.



The World Bank are putting a new water system into Hossana town, and with a better town supply, it should be possible to improve the situation inside the hospital compound.

We have worked together with WaterAid in Ethiopia – and the conclusion is that the hospital needs a water tower (four storey), and a new pump. WaterAid estimates that it will cost around £34,000 to provide a reliable system that will have sufficient capacity to serve the hospital for the years ahead.

The sewage system is blocked at present – partly because it is old and broken, and partly because the water has not been flowing through it. To replace the broken area will cost around £6000 – again on WaterAid estimates.

So our priority this year is to raise funds to cover the majority of the costs of these two projects. We are expecting a 20-25% contribution from the local health zone – **so our target is to raise a further £15,000!** We are applying to a number of agencies for funding- Oxfam, Red Cross, Christian Aid etc, but will be carrying on with our fund-raising events.

So any thoughts or inspirations for this will be much appreciated.....

Pennies from Heaven

In a huge display of generosity, over 1200 staff members signed up to this scheme in December 2009 – to give the pennies on their payslips jointly to St Kentigern Hospice and Ethiopia Link. This is an automatic system run through ESR, and has been adopted by many NHS trusts through the country; for Ethiopia Link it should generate 1200 x 50p /2 each month – or £3200 per annum. So massive thanks to everyone – ask your friends if they want to join as well.

An entirely accurate piece of graffiti added to one of the fliers about the scheme pointed out that the pennies were **not actually** coming from heaven (which would have been very helpful) but were in fact coming from people's wage packets. All absolutely correct – but we presume that when the scheme was invented, they thought **Pennies from Payslips** a less attractive title than **Pennies from Heaven!**



Feb 2010, Hossana: Ben Warrick demonstrates use of central venous lines to anaesthetic and surgical staff at Hossana hospital. These will be of great use in the care of critically sick and injured patients. **Big thanks to Vygon UK** for their generous donation of 4 boxes of double lumen central lines for use in Hossana.

Ethiopia Link is a registered charity (Reg no 1047989 – 14) and links Central Area of BCUHB with Hossana hospital and Yirga Alem hospitals in Ethiopia. The aims are to help with delivery of health care in our partner hospitals, to build capacity, and to learn from each other about key global health issues.



Feb 2010, Hossana: Eifion Thomas grinds a freshly welded new flange onto the previously useless second water pump in Hossana. So when the main pump breaks down (a common event) the spare one can be pressed into service straight away, without having to wait for the main pump to be repaired in Addis Ababa – usually a five day event!

Generator–

the new diesel generator funded by Ethiopia Link has proved very

useful during night-time power cuts in Hossana. No longer is there a frantic search for a torch to help the surgeon complete the operation; at the flick of a switch it kicks in readily.



Hossana – Feb 2010: A total of 120 health officer students were given a half day of highly interactive training in neonatal resuscitation, acute trauma care, and management of paediatric seizures and respiratory problems during the recent visit to Hossana. Feedback was very positive, not only from the health officers, but also from the medical staff who appreciated help with the task of training the huge numbers of health officers coming through the hospital. The interactive style caused some excitement amongst the HO, who are clearly more used to formal and more didactic teaching from their tutors.





Laptops for teaching:

Thanks to Wolfgang Emmerich for the donation of a Dell

laptop for teaching and training at Hossana. Medical and nursing tutors there have a huge number of health officer students coming through the hospital – all needing to be trained in basic medical, surgical and obstetric care. These health officers will be the main providers of care in the health posts and health centres in the rural areas, working alongside sanitarians, midwives, and pharmacists. Each health centre provides primary care for up to 20,000 patients

A Million thanks: Dr Million, medical director at Hossana hospital and senior surgeon there, came to North Wales for 10 days in December 2009. He spent time in various departments in Glan Clwyd hospital.

His courtesy, excellent English, and



enthusiasm was impressive, particularly when (in spite of jet lag) he gave an informative lecture at a well attended open meeting about Hossana hospital. A place for him to attend a three day (ATLS) Acute Trauma Life Support was generously donated by the Resuscitation Department in Wrexham. This course was of particular value to Dr Million with the increasing problem of trauma following the opening of the new road to Hossana. He wishes to pass on his heartfelt thanks to everyone who greeted him so warmly and gave time to show him their work. His only frustration was not seeing any snow – if he had only stayed a little longer!

Oxygen concentrators: Before Ethiopia Link bought two oxygen concentrators for Hossana, patients



would rely solely on the weekly trip in the pick-up truck to

Addis (270km each way) for the hospital

to stock up on oxygen cylinders. **Big thanks to Vital Air** for supplying us with used but perfectly functioning concentrators at token price – they are certainly well used, as shown here, where two patients on the children’s ward receive oxygen from one concentrator! Hossana have requested more of these.



Yirga Alem hospital, Feb 2010:



A team from the ophthalmic departments in HM Stanley and Wrexham Maelor visited

the eye department in Yirga Alem, taking a large haul of eye equipment and teaching material. Some of the kit was confiscated briefly in Customs in Addis, but thankfully later recovered. Along with teaching and training, a large number of patients were reviewed in crowded clinics, and plans were set out for future joint activities.

Tony DaSilva, surgeon from Wrexham, joined the team to



explore the possibility of Wrexham setting up a link with Yirga Alem hospital. Tony’s passion is photography, so look out for some spectacular presentations on the visit in the near future...

Join Ethiopia Link: Updates

on our activities are available on the central area webpages as **Ethiopia Link**, to be found under *working groups*. Included are the annual reports, accounts of recent trips and minutes of link group meetings. Contacts:

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The Big Shave – it’s grown back now, but just for a few weeks, Dr Nick Looker’s chin emerged into the watery November sunshine last year. The beard, which had remained unshaven since 1973, was removed in public as a fund-raising event for Ethiopia Link – and there was an enormously generous response. The beard, in its passing, raised over £1500. The chin is now safely covered again, and will apparently remain so for many years to come.



Members of the eye department from Yirga Alem hospital took time out from a busy visit to HM Stanley hospital last summer to enjoy a trip in a canal boat over the alarming Froncysyllte viaduct. The visit, funded by Vision 2020, formed the basis for the link between the two eye departments which has already proved very fruitful.



Going up in smoke – the old incinerator for Hossana hospital is broken – all sharps are tipped into an open pit at present. So **Ethiopia Link** is funding construction of a new and larger version for safer sharps disposal

Annual General meeting!

Thursday April 15th at 5pm in the Education Centre foyer of Glan Clwyd hospital. Open to all...