

Hospital News

In the last news letter we reported that the container from England had arrived safely and the standby generator and laundry driers had been unloaded without incident. The ability of the workers at the hospital to move large pieces of equipment without the use of heavy lifting gear always surprises me. The commissioning of the dryers did not cause Matt and Rukundo too many problems but getting the generator to work so that it automatically started 15 seconds after the power failed and to switch off after a similar period when the power came back on was more of a problem. With the help of an engineer from Kigali who had experience of generators it was eventually successfully installed.



The bad news is that two weeks after all the work on the generator was completed there was a massive lightning strike which hit just a few feet above the hospital restaurant which produced a crater 18 inches deep. The net result was the control panel for the generator was fried together with the new X ray machine, lab equipment and the control panel for one of the washing machines. The estimated cost of the damage to the hospital equipment is £15,000 (US\$23,250).

A technician came and repaired the X ray at a cost of £2500 (US\$3900) but as of today the video display and printer for the X ray machine are still inoperable because the funds needed for the job are not available. They have had to go back to wet developing of X ray films.



The spare parts for the generator and the washer were ordered via the web and Don Leeming was persuaded to jump on a plane and bring them to Rwanda. If we had sent them by air freight it would have meant major delays, particularly clearing customs. By doing it this way the parts got to the hospital while there was someone available to install them. The good news is that the washer and the generator are both fully working.

The adverse weather that Kibogora has been suffering has had a second disastrous result. The very heavy rain has caused a land slip just beyond the hospital boundary fence close to the new pharmacy/isolation unit and the old private wards. There has been a very real concern that any further rains could cause more slippage resulting in

damage to the foundations of the new building. Engineers have inspected the area and taken core samples from the bank and have recommended the installation of a retaining structure and stabilising work including additional drainage. The cost of this is estimated at around £90,000(US\$140,000). Fortunately the Rwandan Government, through the ministry of health have accepted responsibility and will pay for the repairs. We pray that this will not be subject to the usual long delays that government projects can suffer as we don't want to risk further erosion with the next rainy season.

As you may know Rwanda has joined the British Commonwealth of Nations, only the second country to join which has never been a British colony. They have also joined the East African Free Trade block which comprises Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Government has begun the process of changing from French to English as the primary foreign language. It is intended that all Government business is to be conducted in English, all schools and universities will teach in English in the very near future. In future the hospital will need to make all official reports in English and the medical staff will be expected to be able to speak English. This is a major project particularly when the schools lack English text books and most of the teachers only have rudimentary English. If anyone wants to go to Rwanda and teach English now would be a good time.

Malnutrition programme

It is estimated that 30% of the population in the Kibogora area are under nourished and there are a growing number of children being admitted to the hospital suffering from malnutrition. Children being born to poorly nourished mothers can be born prematurely or can be born severely under a healthy body weight. The children who are malnourished are susceptible to disease and take much longer to recover from even mild infections. The “Sponsor a Bed” programme is helping to fund the feeding programme which is making a huge difference in the lives of many of these children.

HIV/Aids is a major cause of patients being admitted to hospital. At times more than 50% of the beds in the medical wards can be filled with patients suffering from Aids or conditions associated with Aids. The number of children left as orphans due to Aids continues to grow as does the number of elderly left to look after their grand children. Fortunately the availability of drugs has grown over the last five years which enables patients suffering from the disease to live much longer and have productive lives for a much greater period than before.



Witchcraft



The problem of “traditional healers” or more accurately described as “witch doctors” is still encountered. Very often patients arrive at the hospital in a very poor state because they have been “treated” sometimes for prolonged periods by these charlatans and very often are past any possible chance of recovery and die soon after arriving at the hospital. There have been reported incidents of these “healers” telling the relatives of the sick person that if they take them to hospital the mazungo (foreign) doctors will kill them. When the patient dies in hospital they claim to have been correct and use this to scare other sick people into using their services rather than going to hospital.

A young man arrived at the hospital recently with some peculiar marks on his head. His mother confirmed that he had been taken to one of these “healers” because he had an “evil spirit” in his head and the witch doctor had treated the boy by pressing red hot nail head into his scalp. Fortunately the child has no obvious negative effects of this bizarre treatment and the only sign of his encounter with witchcraft is an interesting pattern on his head.

Personnel Changes

Kibogora has been very fortunate to have had Bill and Sue Prullage working at the hospital for the last two years. Bill and Sue are Nurse Practitioners from the USA and have been working with the nursing staff to improve the level of care and to increase the skill levels.

Matt and Lisa Murfitt with their children Chelsea and Jack have been working at Kibogora since October 2009. Matt is acting as maintenance supervisor at the mission site while Lisa has been helping Sheila with the mission hospitality and home schooling their two children.

With the problems caused by the lightning strike, reorganising the new workshop area and renovating some of the houses on the compound Matt has had plenty to keep him busy.

Visitors

A group from Preston Guild Rotary Club visited Kibogora in February for two weeks. The Rotary Club have just concluded a three year commitment to support the work at Kibogora and have been instrumental in raising funds for a replacement autoclave and more recently they have provided the funds to purchase the two dryers for the laundry.

Chris Hedley, from Rotary, conducted a training course for nursing supervisors at the hospital on Care Planning and the introduction of Performance Contracts. This is a new government sponsored initiative to try to standardise to level of care and how performance is measured. Chris was previously the Director of Nursing in one of the largest NHS Hospital Trusts in UK.

Preston Guild Rotary Club are supporting other charitable causes for the next few years, although Chris and a few others will maintain an active interest in Kibogora. We would like to thank the Rotary Club for all they have done and the support they have given and hope they may adopt Kibogora as a project again sometime in the future.



Fund Raising

The first part of the year always seems to be a quiet time for fund raising but there are plenty of events in the pipeline.

The Free Methodist Church at Fulwood, Preston held their annual gift day for Kibogora in March and over £8000 was raised, we are extremely grateful for their continuing support for Sheila and the work being done at Kibogora.

The next fundraising event to take place will be the annual Kibogora Shield Golf Competition which this year will be held on the 16th July at Ashton and Lea Golf Club, Preston.

Later in the year our 3rd annual Kibogora Ball with the Charity Auction will be held on the 2nd October at the Preston Marriott Hotel. If previous years events are anything to go by it will be a fantastic evening.

We are planning a new fund raising venture later this year with the printing of a “Kibogora Calendar” for 2011. This will feature people and places from Kibogora hospital and surrounding area. The cost of this unique calendar will be £10.00 (\$15.00) including postage; all the proceeds will go towards the work at Kibogora. There will be a pdf file posted on the Kibogora web site in a few weeks where you can see the really spectacular photographs that have been included in the calendar. Once the print run has been completed it is hoped that it will be possible to order and pay for the calendar directly from the web site. If you would like any further information on this project please contact j.hally@kibogora.org