



Friends of Nixon Summer Update

Welcome to the Summer edition of the "Friends of Nixon" newsletter updating you with some of the progress and activities initiated by the charity over recent months to assist the development of Nixon Memorial Hospital in Segbwema, Sierra Leone.

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Sponsorship of Midwifery and Community Health Officer training

As part of our ongoing focus on staff training and development at the hospital, we are pleased to announce that Friends of Nixon will fund three existing staff members to undertake courses to improve the clinical expertise at the hospital. Applications for funding from existing staff members were invited and coordinated in Sierra Leone by Mrs Joanna Tetey who leads on scholarships for the Methodist Church Sierra Leone. Two members of the Nixon nursing team, Cecilia Kabba and Fatmata Conteh, have applied to undertake midwifery training in Makeni and Mr Sarrak Kamara has applied to embark on Community Health Office training. If applicants are successful, Friends of Nixon will pay for their fees direct to the training institutions. These staff members will then be contracted to remain at Nixon Hospital for 5 years from the start of their training in order that their colleagues and the hospital can benefit from their experience.



Equipping the New Operating Theatre

Friends of Nixon funded the in-country transport costs and port clearance procedures for two containers of equipment donated and co-ordinated by Dr David Goodhall to equip the new operating theatre in order that it can function properly. Dr Goodhall travelled to Nixon early in 2013 and was able to oversee the necessary training and installation of the equipment which included an operating table, theatre lights, diathermy, lithotomy stirrups, trolleys, maternity beds, cots and a neonatal resuscitair.

Lab Technician training complete!

Three years ago money was kindly raised by the Hatfield Road Methodist Church in St Albans for a student, Phillip Fofanah, to undertake training to become a laboratory technician at Nixon Hospital. On a recent visit to Sierra Leone, one of our trustees, Elizabeth Conteh met up with Philip whilst on placement at the laboratory in Kailahun. We were reassured to hear that Philip has now successfully completed his 3 year course at the Polytechnic College in Kenema and is due to start work in the Nixon laboratory after sitting his final exams in July of this year.

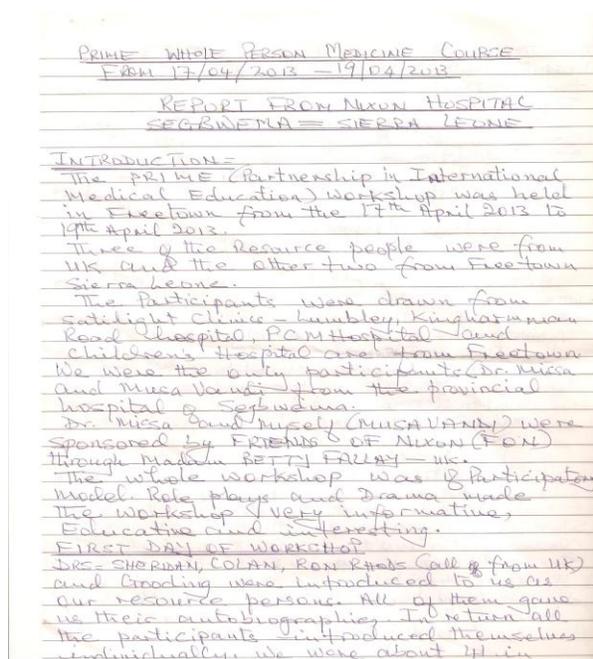
To ensure that laboratory continues to function and become an efficient asset in the day to day running of the hospital, Friends of Nixon recently donated basic laboratory equipment requested by the hospital including reagents and microscope slides. We hope that Philip will assist in the continuing re-development of the laboratory and Friends of Nixon look forward to assisting this where possible.



Mr Philip Fofanah visiting the laboratory at Nixon

PRIME (Partnerships in International Medical Education) Course

In April we were able to sponsor Dr Tamba Missa and Mr Solomon Musa Vandi from Nixon Hospital to attend a 3 day workshop in Freetown held by the UK based organization PRIME who aim to deliver whole person medical education through creating genuine partnerships between medical educators in developed, developing and restructuring nations. Throughout the 3 day course a variety of methods including role play, drama and discussion were employed to cover core topics including the concept of whole person holistic care, leadership, education and compassion; skills and subjects very relevant to Segbwema. The attendees submitted a report to the Friends of Nixon, an excerpt of which is shown to the left.



1 in 5 children in Sierra Leone still die before their 5th birthday and average life expectancy remains at 48 and 49 years for men and women.

Community Health & Latrine Building Project



Side Elevation of Latrine

Following on from his visit in 2012, trustee William Hobson recently returned to Segbwema and the surrounding villages to assess and enable further progress with the latrine project funded by Friends of Nixon. This work is key to community health improvement and the prevention of diseases resulting from poor sanitation. Through meetings with the Community Based Healthcare Team at Nixon and individual village health committees, arrangements to commence latrine building were finalized. The initial pilot project covers 10 villages local to Segbwema and will enable one double drop latrine, or if preferred, two single drop latrines to be built in each village. Prior to the project commencing, background data on village population, number of latrines already in use, together with information on village health committees had been established. If the pilot project is successful the plan is to extend latrine building proportionately to the inhabitants living in each of the 10 villages based on the collated population data. The design of the latrine and costing of materials including the concrete slab and zinc sheets needed for roofing were established through discussions with the village health committees.



Each village health committee will take responsibility for the construction work and this will be overseen by the community based healthcare team at Nixon who will manage funding, purchase and storage of materials and assess the site chosen by each village for constructing their latrine to make sure it will not pollute any water supply. A follow up meeting is planned for later in the year - by which time it is hoped most of the villages will have constructed their latrines - at which the pilot scheme could be assessed and evaluated so that adjustments to our procedures and any other necessary changes could be implemented before a further bid is made. Although the project plays a small role in tackling one of the major determinants of health, it is hoped it will act as a catalyst for further community based health care activity which is key to ensuring that people remain healthy, enabling children to attend school and adults to raise families and contribute to development of their society.

Provision of Teaching Aids



Trustee Elizabeth Conteh with Dr Missa and students of the nursing school following presentation of new teaching equipment.

Following an assessment of teaching resources at the Nixon Nursing School last year, Friends of Nixon were happy to be able to donate a laptop, LCD projector, skeleton and numerous anatomical wall charts to the school. This technology, powered by a small portable generator, will be used within the nursing school to facilitate teaching and improve the educational experience of the students on Community Health Nurse programme.



Second Doctor to work at the hospital

Unfortunately, I will have to relinquish my role of newsletter coordinator and trustee for the Friends of Nixon as I will be travelling to Sierra Leone in August to work for a year as a medical doctor alongside Dr Missa who currently remains the only physician at the hospital. Although my main objective will be to contribute to the day to day clinical work of the hospital and education provision in the nursing school, especially focusing on maternal health, I hope to be able to feed back closely to the 'Friends of Nixon' to help facilitate appropriate funding of projects at the hospital. *(Dr Rob Burnie)*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!

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Donations "For the attention of R. Dixon"

Information "For the attention of Dr. M. Groves"

Trustees are more than happy to consider speaking on the work of the charity

