

BHA - December Newsletter 2014

Bansang Hospital Appeal Winter Newsletter 2014

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Charity No. 1064469

Patrons: Mr Phil Sinkinson OBE, former British High Commissioner to The Gambia
Mr Simon Scarrow, International Bestselling Author

A Message From Anita

I never cease to be amazed at the resilience and enthusiasm of the staff at Bansang Hospital. Yes, the hospital lacks so many resources that we in the west take for granted, but from every one of our volunteers that has spent time at the hospital the opinion is unanimous - the staff are caring, extremely professional and happy in their work. This is a complete reversal of the situation in those early years when nobody wanted to work in Bansang Hospital. It is your generosity and support over the past 22 years that has helped make this hospital so special. The Management Team does not compromise on the care of patients - they strive for the best treatment/care possible. To this end, all staff are now actively encouraged to have additional training and where appropriate to take up available scholarship schemes.

Due to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the tourist industry, which underpins the economy in The Gambia, has been brought to its knees with devastating effects being felt throughout the country. Even though there are no cases in The Gambia, tourists have decided to holiday elsewhere causing hotels and restaurants to close and unemployment to rise. It has also been a bad year for the rice and groundnut crops, two staples of the Gambian diet, as the rains arrived two months late. As a result of this economic downturn the hospital urgently requires funds to buy urgent medical supplies.

A heartfelt thank you on behalf of management, staff and the entire Bansang community. They are all grateful and very aware of the help that you have given. Rest assured your contributions make a difference to the lives of many thousands of people.

Wishing you all Peace, Health , Happiness and Love this Christmas.

Anita

A warm welcome for new medical staff



We are pleased to welcome newly appointed Administrator, Baboucarr Saine, an important addition to the dynamic Management Team. We also welcome two resident Gambian surgeons Gray Johnson a general surgeon and Dr Nyassi an obstetric surgeon to the hospital. Both have studied in Russia, and are now pleased to be able to commit their time to help their people. These are new surgical positions which means that very few patients now have to be referred for further treatment to Banjul - a 200 mile journey by ambulance. The result is a huge cost saving for the hospital and a much improved experience for the patients and their relatives. The new staff are shown being welcomed, together with the latest Cuban medical team of doctors, by the hospital management. We wish them a happy and productive time working at the hospital.

75 Years Later - New Pharmacy Opens

Thank you to all our wonderful supporters who made it possible for the Pharmacy to be fully renovated and extended. Patients can now sit in comfort, protected from the elements whilst waiting for medicines to be dispensed. Staff now work in a modern environment and drugs are protected in new air conditioned storage rooms



Staff Charitable Farming Association



The tractor, trailer, harrow, plough and seeder have now arrived in Bansang and a tractor driver has been recruited. The equipment has already been used by The Staff Charitable Farming Association, alongside the oxen previously provided, to help harvest the couscous that is grown to provide nutritious food for the patients.

This scheme has been running very successfully for the past 3 years, making considerable savings on the hospital food budget, and the local village chiefs are so happy with the results that they have given further land to the Association. The Association now has 5 farms and in Spring 2015 work will start in earnest to grow maize, beans, NERICA rice (New Rice for Africa), couscous and ground nuts. The aim is to make the scheme self sustaining, but in the meantime there is a need for funding to finance the expansion of the scheme which the Appeal will provide. Future profits from the scheme, including funds earned from renting the tractor to local enterprises, will be used to fund the purchase manure and pesticides.

Staff from KGH visit Bansang

Jeannette Payne (Neonatal Matron) and husband Chris, old friends of Bansang Hospital, persuaded Dr Jasmina Marinova (Consultant Paediatrician) her husband George and daughter Kalina to join them in Bansang. Kalina has been fund raising for Bansang since she was 14 – and it was great she has had the opportunity to see where her money has gone.

Dr Jasmina and Jeannette spent time teaching resuscitation for newborns and also introduced a Paediatric Observation Score system on the children's ward. This helps staff recognise if a child is deteriorating, allowing earlier treatment to prevent complete collapse. The system was

successfully implemented within two weeks reflecting the skill and professionalism of the staff – and their determination to give the best care in the most difficult conditions. Chris and George did a lot of DIY work, fitting privacy curtains around beds in the wards and also transforming the staff television room - fitting the projector in the ceiling to give more space and redecorating the walls and floor.



Newly Refurbished and Extended Staff Accommodation

A further 8 units of staff family accommodation have been fully refurbished and extended. This brings the total units refurbished by the Appeal to 48 family homes, 12 single bed studio rooms and 2 guest suites for volunteers. This would not have been possible without the help of our supporters, many of whom have sponsored individual units. As a result of listening to the staff and their needs, we realise that quality accommodation, together with respect and equality, are the key factors attracting dedicated medical staff to stay in Bansang. A 99% staff retention rate says it all.



Providing decent staff accommodation in our view also extends to the management team and the trustees were unanimous in their decision to renovate the house provided to the Chief Executive. The CEO cares so deeply about the hospital and its staff and he always puts their needs before his own. The house is very dilapidated and is currently uninhabitable so the CEO lives instead in tiny accommodation with no room for his family to join him in Bansang. The funding for the renovation is being provided by one of our very generous local supporters, to whom we are very grateful.



British Plumbing Employees Council (BPEC), Life Award

The BPEC Life Award was awarded to BHA in October 2013. It comprised a grant of £15,006.02 to update the plumbing facilities in the hospital. 14 months later and all the projects are completed. These include newly renovated sewers and bathrooms in the Female, Labour, Maternity wards and the Eye Unit. Newly built washrooms in Out Patients and the maintenance store, renovated washrooms in the kitchen, laundry, duty room and Administration Department. Along with newly built bathrooms in four staff units that had collapsed. The Orderly in the photo is so very proud of the new toilets on the Female Ward, he can always be found cleaning and polishing them. Before, EVERYONE kept their distance, it was that bad!!



Anita and Nick Foley Receive BPEC Legacy Award 2014



At the Annual BPEC Award Ceremony this year BHA was awarded the BPEC Legacy Award 2014. This is a new initiative that came about after a visit to Bansang Hospital by Trustees from BPEC who realised that there was so much more that still needed to be done! The Legacy Award is a 3 year funding program, with a value of just under £12,000, aimed at rebuilding the maintenance store, improving the skills of the hospital's plumbers, through additional training schemes and increasing awareness of health and safety. In 2015 the old maintenance store will be pulled down - it only needs a nudge! The new maintenance store will offer a workshop, upgraded storage facilities, an office, a washroom and, to bring it into the 21st century along with a room to have a lunch break in.

New Project – Improvements to Paediatric Clinic and Admin Offices

There are two problems we are currently trying to address for our next project. The main priority is the Paediatric Clinic which needs to be moved to a more appropriate location. At present the clinic takes place in a "corridor" outside the Dental Clinic and fights for space with patients queuing for dental treatment, affording no privacy for the sick children. Secondly, the Senior Management and Admin team are housed in cramped conditions in the hospital grounds.

To free up space for the Paediatric Clinic we will have to move several departments. Management and Admin will move to the old Female Ward, once it has been completely renovated to provide suitable office space and rooms for meetings and training. The Records Dept, currently in the area used for clinics, will then be moved into the old admin offices freeing up the space to house the new Paediatric Clinic. Total cost of the project is about £27,000. Work will start soon but we still need to raise £20,000 to complete the work.

Vital Equipment and Medicines

We are still very aware that we have to continue to address the many urgent needs of this very busy hospital that serves 600,00 people. This year so far we have provided a blood refrigeration unit and a patient monitor for use with adults, paediatrics and neonates to monitor their vital signs. This can be used both in theatres and as portable equipment in emergencies. It goes without saying that we continue to provide the necessary drugs needed for the treatment of the patients.



How you can help

The Appeal urgently needs funds to support the hospital either in providing life saving drugs and medical equipment or through the projects mentioned above. All donations, whatever the size, will make a huge difference.

Donations

Virgin Money Giving: To make an online donation please click search for 'Bansang Hospital Appeal' on Virgin Money Giving. Or alternatively please visit the following link; <http://bit.ly/1Gtd6bB>

Mobile: You can donate from your mobile through JustTextGiving by Vodafone. Just text BANS14 followed by your donation amount (£1/£2/£5 or £10) to 70070. For example, BANS14 £10

Standing Orders: These allow us to budget on a monthly basis. It does not matter how small, all is welcomed. Please contact Anita for further details. If you are a tax payer please Gift Aid as this will enable us to reclaim tax on your donation.

Alternatively please get in touch using the contacts at the bottom of the page.