

Uganda Childbirth Injury Fund

Newsletter December 2019

A charity to cure by surgery women made incontinent though complications in childbirth and other surgical procedures.

Registered UK Charity No 1099135

It has been a busy year for the UCIF team starting in January this year with a camp in Kitovu Mission Hospital. This was a really successful camp with 70 operations being undertaken many of which were complex cases which benefited from the experience of Dr Breen, Dr Asimwe and of course Dr Mhairi Campbell. Dr Kate and Dr Kirstie also attended bringing with them their enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge, and a willingness to share this with 3 Ugandan doctors in training.

February saw a 6 strong team travel to Kamuli, Dr Mhairi, Dr Catherine, and Dr Honest, 3 fistula surgeons, Dr Richard as anaesthetist, and Nurse Ishbel and Midwife Christine. It was all hands on deck as on arrival 78 patients were waiting on us to triage, with more drifting in over the week. A double triage meant we started operating that afternoon, and in total 43 women with fistula or 4th degree tears were operated on. As always it was a priority to teach and support our Ugandan colleagues, so it was great to have nurse anaesthetist Ellen a camp



Ishbel and Christine together with the fistula ward nurses had their hands full with 10 new patients per day, but still managed to fit in teaching for the midwifery students and extra activities for the patients - sewing and knitting skills! It is hoped that acquiring extra skills may help with reintegration. The girls also ran a very popular “nail bar”. - painting the nails of all of the patients. One lady told us she had been wet for 22 years, forced to stay out of sight and smell at the back of her brother’s house. Experiencing true care from the nurses, happy to touch her, be with her and even paint her nails was like letting sunshine into her life again - it was wonderful to see the patients blossoming in this care, and in the hope that they might be able to rejoin society, dry.



In September a double camp including a week at Mubende and a week in Kamuli was undertaken. Mhairi, Cathrine and Ishbel Campbell joined Alphons matovu and Ian Assiimwe in Mubende. There was a real passion to enthuse and encourage more young Ugandan surgeons to take up the mantle of fistula surgery, so a great effort was made in this camp to start to teach these young doctors on the rudiments of fistula and perineal injury surgery. The sheer volume of patients proved a major challenge for Ishbel and the ward staff, in that the ward was completely full at all times, with a steady progression of postoperative cases to be cared for each day. It is a testament to Ishbels' determination and resourcefulness that all fistula patients had beds while perineal repair patients

were



In Kamuli, Christine Wood and Kate Darlow started the camp with a monster triage effort r surgery. Mhairi and Ishbel arrived then for 4 days of intense work, keeping theatre staff and Ellen the excellent anaesthetist busy into the evenings. Ian Assiimwe joined the team for 3 days, and Dr Boni from Kamuli was most attentive throughout the camp, beginning to undertake some surgery himself. There were 32 fistula patients treated plus 10 perineal repairs and one 5 year old underwent surgery.



Without your ongoing support none of this would be possible , we are sincerely thankful. Wishing you all a happy Christmas and lovely New Year. Brian , Mhairi , Kate , Ishbel , Brenda, Sarah

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