



Barbara May
Foundation

Maternity Care Africa

Save the Mother, Save the World

From the desk of the Medical Director – Dr Andrew Browning AM

A Quarterly report for our major donors and key stakeholders

QUARTER July-Sept 2020

I hope this finds you well and safe wherever you are in the world.

Life has been tumultuous in the Afar area of Ethiopia with a combination of a devastating life changing locust plague earlier this year which has returned even more severely. A drought last year and now economic hardship brought about by the pandemic lockdowns had made things even worse. All these event had caused immense suffering as reported last quarter. Val and her team are now supporting well over 2000 severely malnourished pregnant women with lifesaving food supplements, thanks to kind donations from Australia. To compound this there has been devastating flooding across East Africa and the horn of Africa. The Awash River in Afar has flooded because of the rains in the highlands, displacing nearly 150,000 people. Many livestock have been lost and the food insecurity increases.

Although there are positive cases of Covid in Afar there have been no reported deaths from the virus, but sadly many deaths due to floods, locust and lockdowns have occurred.

The Barbara May Memorial Maternity Hospital (BMMH), Mille, Ethiopia



Dr Margaret remains in the UK, keen to get back depending on travel restrictions being lifted and of course visas.

Dr Omar needed to travel this quarter and as per the government regulations had a Covid swab beforehand. It came back positive meaning that the government ceased almost all activities at the hospital while Dr Omar was in quarantine and undergoing further testing. The hospital went through a thorough fumigation. Fortunately, the repeat testing of Dr Omar came back as negative and he returned to work. Unfortunately, word had got out into the community that the hospital had a case and the patients stayed away. Val's staff have been busy in the community reassuring people that all is well and the patients are returning.

The good news is that the solar pump for the water well was fixed this quarter and we are grateful to have reliable running water back in the hospital.



Some sticks entirely covered with locusts in Afar. They have eaten everything in their path leaving no food for people nor livestock- severely affecting the people, including pregnant mothers.

Obstetrics			
	Jul	Aug	Sept
Deliveries	43	46	53
Caesareans	1	1	7
Maternal Deaths	0	1	0
NN Deaths/ IUFD/ SB	4	3	2
Antenatal visits	250	269	296
Antenatal admissions	59	52	51
Gyne ops/ admissions	13	21	10
Gynae clinic visits	152	113	142
Rural health deliveries	1750 for the quarter 7 maternal deaths	4929 other diseases/ patients treated in the community	

Vision Maternity Care Hospital (VMC), Barhir Dar, Ethiopia



The hospital and staff have been working hard but this quarter there was a drop in the number of deliveries. This was put down to a heavier-than-normal rainy season- hence the floods in Afar. The heavier rains mean that transport is more difficult, and certainly harder than the rainy season last year. There was only one perinatal death this quarter, a tremendous effort, but then again there were a number of newborns referred to the government hospital and we don't know their outcome.

I am looking forward to returning to VMC in the coming weeks. Birhanu is still waiting to hear when his studies in obstetrics and gynaecology will commence.

Obstetrics			
	July	Aug	Sept
Deliveries	193	191	193
Caesareans	25	24	26
Maternal Deaths	0	0	0

NN death/ IUFD/ SB	1	0	0
Neonatal referrals	6	4	7
Antenatal visits	1148	1071	1211

TANZANIA

Kivulini Maternity Centre, Arusha, Tanzania



The food supplements for impoverished women continue and we're grateful for your help for those women.

With the help of generous donors, Dr Lemmy has been undertaking his speciality training in obstetrics and gynaecology in Ukraine. He's just arrived back in Arusha to be stationed at Maternity Africa for five months as part of his training program. We're very grateful.

We're also delighted that Dr Mbise has now finished his training in O&G and he is going to work for MA part time. Congratulations Dr Mbise for all your hard work.

Michael Hynd, Maria and new born baby Grace have just arrived back in Tanzania too. They are very excited to be back - although Grace is still adjusting.

Obstetrics			
	July	Aug	Sept
Deliveries	203	201	226
Caesareans	32	45	45
Maternal Deaths	0	0	0
Neonatal Death/ IUFD/SB	4	6	2
Neonatal referrals	4	0	2
Antenatal clinic visits	782	650	925
Postnatal clinic visits	146	157	221
Gynaecology			
Minor	10	13	17
Major	3	7	0
Family Planning			
Consultations clinic	257	251	277
Family planning uptake	61%	47%	45%



Dr Mbise- on the far right, with his graduating class.. Congratulations!

Sth Sudan.



The Lutheran church in America has been very helpful providing the funds to expand their health clinic in Juba, Sth Sudan. It's where we do fistula work a couple of times a year. Their expansion means turning it into a maternity hospital. We hope to partner by placing volunteer obstetricians and midwives there in the future.

Australia

Slowly, there have been more opportunities to speak about the work of BMF as Covid restrictions wax and wane. I've been able to present at a few schools, churches and interest groups. As people get more familiar with zoom there have been opportunities to speak at Rotary clubs farther afield. It's never as good as meeting face to face but it serves a purpose.

I am very thankful that I have been granted permission to leave Australia and travel to Ethiopia and Tanzania this week. The reports are that there are more fistula patients because of the lockdowns, women haven't been able to get to hospital and deliver and so deliver at home. I'm very excited to get back and operate again.

I've also been able to unofficially operate on two fistula patients in Australia. Both doing well and grateful and one has signed up to be a donor! Finally, I have been convinced to write a book about our work in Africa and it has the title 'A doctor in Africa'. We hope it will raise our profile (and funds) next April or May when it is released by Pan Macmillan.

Conclusion

With sincere thanks to The Planet Wheeler Foundation, The Barbara May Foundation, IMPACT UK, DAK, RAWCS, Sydney and South Western Sydney Local Health Districts, Morris Family Foundation, Sonic Health Care, Ripple Foundation and CCBRT for their generous support. Thanks to the staff and volunteers of Maternity Africa Tanzania, Vision Maternity Care, Barhir Dar, Ethiopia and the Barbara May Memorial Maternity Hospital, Mille, Ethiopia along with our partners in Arusha; Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre, Selian Hospital who generously give their time, knowledge and expertise without whom we would be able to help so many women across Africa.

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