



“Hope in the light”

The Fife Malawi ENT Project

The Ear Nose and Throat Department in Fife, Scotland has developed a partnership with our colleagues in Blantyre, Malawi. Malawi, in Africa, is a country of similar size to Scotland with 15 million residents. Malawi is one of the world’s poorest nations. Currently the ENT needs of the population are served by 1 consultant surgeon, 2 junior doctors in training and 2 clinical officers within the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre and 15 clinical officers in the district hospitals. There are no trained ENT nurses.

In partnership with the ministry of Health of Malawi, the colleges of medicine and nursing and NHS Fife we aim to offer and support individualised ENT training for Nursing, Clinical Officers and Doctors in training. Our first priority would be with the Nursing training

Nursing Staff: We propose a training scheme which would include bringing nursing staff, 2/3 at a time, to the Fife department from Blantyre for a period of 3 months where specialised ENT training would be undertaken in the ward, clinic and theatre environments. Nurses from Fife would then return with them to Blantyre for 2-4 weeks to support them to put in to practice the skills learned. In time we hope to support these nurses to provide an in house training scheme.

Clinical Officers These non-medically trained clinicians are the working force in Malawi. Unfortunately, because of lack of a UK equivalent they cannot be registered for practice in the UK. We aim, therefore, to provide training support and regular updates by facilitating and developing the provision of ENT Teaching Weeks in Malawi delivered by ourselves and other international visiting teams. We have already helped secure valuable on line British resources for them.

Doctors in Training would also be included in the online support and ENT weeks. In addition to this we aim to facilitate, through the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow MTI programme, periods of training in the UK for 6-12 months. In time we hope to facilitate a registrar exchange programme.

Longterm Goals

The aim is to create sustainable ENT training and services in Malawi.

This will facilitate the Malawian Ministry of Health 5 year plan to train ENT nurses thus creating a centre of excellence in Blantyre of dedicated ENT trained nurses in the ward, outpatient and theatre environment.

Update on Achievements July 2018

So far we have achieved 3 visits of Scottish nurses and doctors to Malawi with another planned for November 2018. We have had 2 visits of Malawian nurses to the UK. We have joined forces with St Andrews university Global Health initiative to provide scholarship status for the nurses for them to be able to practice as students and allow them to access visas.

1. A pilot visit took place in October with the matron and one of the clinical officers for a month.
2. In August 2017 2 theatre nurses came to Scotland for 3 months. They had experience of working in the ward and clinic setting but concentrated on theatre work. They received tutorials and even gave a lecture at ST Andrews University. A group of nurses returned to Malawi with them to help support them to put their knowledge in to practice. There has already been a demonstrable improvement in the theatre environment as the ENT theatres came top of the hospital cleanliness audit in 2018. The 2 nurses have signed up to stay in ENT for 3 years so we are hopeful that these standards will be maintained.
3. We are planning to have 2 ward nurses visit in 2019. The delay has been a lack of suitable candidates in Malawi but we are hopeful of identifying suitable nurses at our visit in November.

We have dovetailed our visits with an English group and been involved in the planning and delivery of teaching weeks for the clinical officers in Malawi.

We have supported one of the registrars to come to the UK for an observational visit and organised for him to attend valuable skills courses. Our aim is to support him through the IELTS exam and arrange for an MTI post for him .

We continue to work with the department and outside agencies to improve the physical environment of the department. We are in discussions with a Scottish charity about refurbishment of one of the theatre and the Rotary about upgrading the ward.

Kerry Haddow, Patricia Mackie, David Walker

July 2018