



## HTG Spring newsletter 2007

### Dear Supporter,

Welcome to our Spring 2007 newsletter. We have completed nearly 3 years as a charity now and we continue to contribute to the development of the health sector in The Gambia. We will show you some of the things we have done as well as laying out our plans for the future. What we can do is possible only with your generous and continued support - and for that we are extremely grateful. The trustees thank you.

### Another Year's Work

We have picked a few of the different projects we are involved in to illustrate the range of our work and why we do what we do. We have again published our annual report and accounts, which you can find on our website. This will give you more details of our work and how we spend your generous donations.

### Projects

**Oncology project:** a nurse led cancer clinic has started for the first time at RVTH. HTG is funding the personnel as well as supplies and equipment to keep the clinic running for an initial period of 2 years. The aim of the project is to provide a service which can, for now, diagnose, treat and provide palliative care for patients with cancer. The long term aim is cancer education and prevention.

**Neonatal project:** this project (currently in its training phase at RVTH) aims to help RVTH to reduce its infant mortality rates by the use of WHO recommended techniques for managing neonates. The project hopes to fund 2 neonatal nurses in the paediatric department. Both projects will be supported by clinicians in The Gambia and abroad through tele-medicine.

**Nutrition project:** this project is currently in development with RVTH's paediatric staff. Its aim is to reduce the effects of severe malnutrition in infancy and, therefore reduce infant mortality, via implementation of a unified nutrition policy at RVTH.

### In This Issue:

- [Another Year's Work](#)
- [Projects](#)
- [Equipment](#)
- [Staff](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Fundraising](#)
- [Advocacy](#)
- [Future Plans](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [You](#)

**Our Aim:** To improve healthcare in The Gambia, specifically at Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital (RVTH)

## Equipment

This past year HTG has provided (among other things) the following:

1. Glucose testing-stix (in conjunction with another UK charity) to measure blood sugar levels,
2. Some power tools for the RVTH maintenance department,
3. Badly needed enhanced lighting in the Accident & Emergency department and
4. A coulter counter for essential blood tests for RVTH's pathology department. HTG is aware that the funding of these items is outside its core strategic aims, but such ad hoc assistance is inevitable given RVTH's precarious financial situation.

## Staff

HTG is delighted that Mariama Jobe has been recruited to staff the oncology project at RVTH. Huja Jah, our development officer, continues to do very valuable work for RVTH and HTG, both in her fundraising work, focusing on helping RVTH to target domestic funding sources in The Gambia and in the management of the key relationship between RVTH and HTG. Huja is assisted by Sohna Mbye, who ensures that HTG's projects at RVTH run smoothly.

## Training

HTG continues to fund training for a variety of courses for RVTH staff. All courses are relevant to the development needs of the hospital and all the trainees are encouraged to deploy their new skills for the benefit of RVTH. HTG is particularly pleased that an RVTH accountant (Abdoulie Jabang) is now in the final stages of his ACCA qualification. Very recently, HTG has supported palliative care training, to underpin the work of the Oncology Project, training for neonatal staff and refresher training for the staff in the Paediatric A&E department. All this training has been done on a low-tech, cost-efficient basis – HTG believes that this represents the right paradigm for effective staff training at RVTH.

## Fundraising

The past year has seen great fundraising success for HTG, leading the trustees to believe that HTG now has a solid resource base. In addition to our base donations of £7000 per year, HTG received a one off donation of £20000. This will allow HTG to undertake medium to long term commitment to RVTH projects. We are pleased with the level of support for our charity and we are redoubling our fund raising efforts to enable us to provide more ambitious support to RVTH. HTG also continues to administer the FRVTH scheme which allows the hospital to reward its hardworking staff and over £2,000 was disbursed to RVTH at the end of the busy malaria season. HTG's administration of the scheme allows for the acceptance of credit card donations, as well as the ability to claim gift aid from UK based donors.

Our work is primarily based at the Royal Victoria Teaching Hospital in the capital, Banjul. This is the only sizable hospital in the country, and is the focus for training both nurses and doctors at a national level. It also provides healthcare for the local population and referral services for the entire country. Most of our staff either currently work or have worked in The Gambia, so we know what the problems are. We are working in cooperation to help solve them, but to do that we need your help.

If you have any questions about this newsletter, HTG more generally, or if you've recently visited The Gambia and would like to share your stories with us, please get in touch .

## Advocacy

HTG continues to encourage other organisations to work with RVTH. HTG is involved in a conference, being held in The Gambia, in conjunction with RVTH and MRC to explore ways of achieving the millennium development goals in maternal and child health. It continues to encourage the activities of VSO within the Gambia, focussing on RVTH.

## Future plans

Whilst HTG is pleased with what it has achieved so far, we are aware of the great challenges ahead. We continue to work closely with RVTH to identify suitable projects for funding. These may include infection control, malaria and risk management.

RVTH is also doing its best to utilise its scant resources efficiently. It has recently become autonomous which should give it better control of its finances. It also has its own fundraising efforts which include local companies furnishing and maintaining wards. Quality management is taken seriously to help scarce resources stretch further.

## About Us

HTG continues to be run by a group of British and Gambian people all of whom have direct knowledge of The Gambia and RVTH. There have been recent changes in personnel. We are sorry to lose our first and dynamic chair ( David Lankester) who has moved to Pakistan. Ben Sheahan joined the trustees on David's departure and George Fowles has taken over as chair. Louise Worth has just joined as a new trustee. Visit our website if you would like to know more about our trustees. Dr Malick Njie has replaced Dr Esangbedo as Chief Medical Director of RVTH. We are also delighted to have recently expanded our group of stakeholders who support the trustees in selecting and developing projects and programmes to include more Gambian medical personnel.

## You

Last but not least you make our vital work possible through your generous donations. We are always keen to recruit more donors, so we encourage to give regularly as well as tell interested friends and colleagues about us. We will be happy to send a copy of the newsletter to them. Recurring donations lets us do more as we can plan better for the future. We will listen to any fundraising ideas and help out as best we can.

Some companies have schemes for supporting charities and often match/multiply gifts from their employees. Most such donations are tax deductible. If you would like more information about applying to your company on our behalf, please contact us.

And remember, every penny counts, so if you can please tick the "Gift Aid" option for any donation you give and we get an extra 28% at no cost to you.