

NEWSLETTER
MAY 2020
ISSUE 23

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Friends of African Nursing

Chair of Trustees Report

Charities together with much of the structure of life as we knew it before the pandemic struck—has been affected in many ways. Some have shown that for example, enabling street dwellers a decent bed in an empty hotel for nights, has changed their clients desire to move back to a more conventional way of living. Food banks have been busier than ever previously recorded with so many adults furloughed or having lost their jobs. Charities have risen to the immense challenges and there are many examples daily of changes to society but also many random acts of kindness around the country. I have no doubt that this is multiplied around the world.

This charity has had all our work reduced to a point where it is more than possible that we will not visit Africa until 2021 to deliver face to face education. However, due to the kindness of supporters we have an on-line education solution which we hope will help our African colleagues and in some way reduce their fear and concerns. This has been in place for a while but is not used to it's full capacity. We will need to review and enhance the offerings to bring them up to date with Covid 19 data, especially before surgery re-starts in the world.

Our annual meeting to determine strategy for the year ahead, is usually held in June and we were to have convened at Dot's house in a few weeks time. This event will now take place on Skype and we will meet properly later in the year when we are freer to do so.

Covid 19 does not seem to be affecting Africa in the way which was feared and

whilst there is not yet research to determine why this is, it seems that there are a few reasons. The governments in many countries were very quick to lockdown and confine their populations to reduce the spread of the virus. The young age of many of the populations may also have contributed to only 3,100 deaths being recorded across the continent when the number of infections passed 100,000. We were very fearful that the health systems in the countries where we have taught, would be very quickly overwhelmed. Many have a low level of intensive care beds and WHO estimate there are only around 2,000 ventilators across the whole continent. It is a miracle that Africa has not been harder hit. For that we are very grateful. We have sent a limited amount of information to our Clinical Ambassadors on Covid 19 on such critical issues as PPE and aerosol generating procedures. We have received positive feedback from a number of them and hope that it has been helpful and informative, to keep them safe. You may recall that we send regular research and articles we judge to be of interest and they ask for specific topics for the on-line education and articles—a win-win relationship. They then circulate the information to their networks—so for example Ghana have an active perioperative association across the country and these members are their circulation list. At a distance we can still have a considerable impact, which is wonderful. We trust that our direct relationships will be able to return “to normal” before long.

Kate Woodhead

Visit to Ghana 2020

In January Diane Gilmour and Sandra Pryme joined by Linda Whyte from FoAN Canada travelled to Accra, Ghana. The purpose of our visit to deliver a 3 day leadership and 2 day perioperative training programme to Ghanaian nurses.

We were hosted by the team at the Medical & Surgical Skills Institute (MSSI) who, looked after us very well providing an excellent training facility, administration support and some very nice food. Richard our driver from MSSI took us on a tour of Accra and we visited the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and memorial park. This beautiful park is dedicated to the life of Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah. We had 50 delegates on the leadership programme, nurses from all backgrounds some hospital and some community based. We were very impressed to hear that a group of these nurses had travelled over 8 hours by car to attend the programme. The delegates joined in all the activities sharing their own knowledge and experiences and we had some very lively and engaging debate.

We had 34 delegates for the two day perioperative programme these nurses work in a variety of roles in theatres from health care assistants to nursing officers. They all appeared to enjoy networking with colleagues and sharing practice. Some of the issues affecting theatre nurses in Ghana are the same as those faced by UK nurses namely lack of staff, lack of equipment and a lack of training. The Ghanaian delegates impressed me with their good humour and their passion for learning and developing their own practice areas.

During our visit we met with Rita Aryee Director of Nursing Services at Korle Bu Hospital. Rita took up her post less than a year ago and she shared with us her vision for training and development for her nursing staff. Rita would like to develop a culture of coaching and mentoring. Rita is very supportive of FoAN she told us that two years ago she attended one FoAN's leadership programmes. Rita arranged for us to visit the main theatre suite in Korle Bu hospital, the staff were very welcoming and showed us around the theatres and recovery it was one of the highlights of the visit.

Feedback comments from the leadership programme on being asked what will you do differently as a result of this education?

I will always set an example in all my activities and professional work

This course has given me the courage to be able to lead and

I will try to handle conflict better than before

And in answer to the same question but from the perioperative course:-

Follow standard precautions at all times.

Voicing out when something is not okay

Implement the new ideas i have received

Sandra Pryme, FoAN Trustee. March 2020



Visit to Theatres at Korle Bu Hospital, Accra, Ghana.



Delegates at MSSI, January 2020.

Donation of cards

FoAN wishes to thank Chris and Lesley Fudge for the continuing support and supply of cards to FoAN for sale.

The cards are all available for sale, on-line at foan.org.uk as well as appearing regularly at all our events.

FoAN cards have recently been sold by a supporter in New Zealand !

Commonwealth Nurses Conference, London. March 2020

Dot was able to represent FoAN at the above conference and was invited to give a short presentation on our activities. This was well received and further discussions have continued.

Books sent to Mission Hospital in Kenya.

Textbooks donated to FoAN were sent to a Mission Hospital in Kenya earlier in the year. We hear they have arrived and will be very useful!

More books will be sent to small hospitals in rural Ghana when the world returns to "normal".



Fundraisers Postponed

As you would expect, various fundraisers planned for this spring have been postponed including a Coffee Morning in Eastleigh, a Coffee Morning and Jewellery Sale in Thorner and a Tea Dance in Basingstoke. We are sad not to have been able to bring up to date information on the charity activities to our friends and supporters, but we will resume when it is safe to do so.

Visits to Africa 2020

Visits were being planned for an extensive visit to Rwanda, and a return to Uganda for the charity. It is unlikely that we will be able to travel in 2020 so are planning at present how we may use our energies and talents.

Facemasks



Kate has been making cloth, re-usable facemasks during lockdown. As a means of raising a small volume of donations and as an exercise in maintaining sanity! Approximately £100



has been donated to FoAN by many people and masks have been sent all over the country.

Class of 2019, Rwanda

Covid 19 in Africa

Africa has so far been spared many of the horrors of Covid 19 although every country has had some cases. The number of deaths has thankfully been very low, with South Africa reporting more than any other country. WHO is intrigued by the data and as they have a presence in every country, and are looking into it with great interest. It is possible that swift responses to lockdown have been very effective, and the percentage of youth is higher than elsewhere, may be the reasons.



Recovery staff in Lusaka.
The paperwork is never done!