

Malawi April 2006

Benchmarking Visit

The second visit to any country is a practical benchmarking exercise, designed to benchmark hospitals against each other providing local feedback and advice on issues as well as an in-country report on perioperative practice to the ministry.

Lesley Fudge and Kate Woodhead travelled with Roseanne Robison a lecturer from Dundee. We began our journey in Lilongwe, the capital, visiting the main referral hospital Kamuzu Central Hospital. We were fortunate enough to be given a tour of the hospital before our visit to the Operating Theatres (this is often missed due to time constraints and it can inform much of our teaching, as well as providing background on the patients' journey). After lunch we taught a group of nurses - perioperative and others, and enjoyed some good debates on waste management and universal precautions.

We set off the following day to Zomba, tasting sugar cane from the road side and causing chaos at an orphanage by stopping to take photos of the children! Zomba District Hospital also gave us a tour around the hospital and an excellent, if rushed, visit to the new Operating Theatres. The surgeons asked us to return for a month of intense practical teaching - we explained why that would not be possible! The afternoon was spent teaching a full room, in the School of Nursing, of nurses from the hospital. Not often do we have a room full of 50+ learners!

We continued the journey to Blantyre, by road enjoying the kindness of Limbe Leaf who had supplied us with cars and drivers.

Queen Elizabeth 2 Hospital in Blantyre gave us a splendid afternoon around the theatres, hospital wards and departments. We spent the following day teaching a large group of perioperative nurses who had been gathered from the districts and enjoyed stimulated discussion sessions. Apart from our Projector turning itself off (when it got hot?) - we had a great day teaching.

We were pleased to find the PONAM executive group still working on plans although they have difficulty with spreading the word, to the many far flung district hospitals. Some airtime was given to Peter Chirwa, Treasurer who attended the education day at Blantyre.

Many thanks to Roseanne for all her enthusiasm and hard work. She is full of ideas as to how her unit at home can help Malawi in the future