



Countess Bulletin

Update on Countess / Kisiizi Hospital Link

Key Points

- Over 100 members of Trust staff have registered their interest in the link
- They cover a wide cross section of professions and disciplines
- £2,500 seedcorn funding has been granted by THET
- A Project Board for the link met for the first time on 7th March 2008
- Over £2,700 was raised at the Trust's Celebration of Achievement event
- A team of six people will undertake a 'scoping visit' in July 2008
- Question about the link or our intentions for the future, should be directed to Pam Hodgson in the Chief Executive's office.

Since the Open Staff Meeting on 30th November 2007, much has happened to progress the institutional link between the Countess and Kisiizi Hospital in south west Uganda. The key items of progress are set out herein.

Staff Interest

Over 100 members of Trust staff, across a wide cross section of professions and disciplines, have registered their interest in the link with Kisiizi. Such interest ranges from just being kept informed through to helping to arrange visits (from Chester to Kisiizi and vice versa) and actually participating in the visits. All staff expressing interest have been entered on to a database and will be the first to know about major milestones in the establishment and development of the link.

If anyone wishes to add their name and contact details to the database, please contact Pam Hodgson (ext. 3039 or via email pam.hodgson@coch.nhs.uk).

Tropical Health & Education Trust (THET)

In December 2007, the Trust submitted an application to THET for 'seedcorn funding' for the project. £2,500 was granted and this will be used to fund the travel and associated arrangements of a team of Countess staff, who will undertake a 'scoping visit' to Kisiizi in 2008. The Trust is required to produce a report as to how the money has been spent and how the objectives stated in the bid have been progressed during the first year.

Project Board

A Project Board for the link has been established and met for the first time on 7th March 2008. The initial membership is as follows:-

David Wood, Director of HR & Corporate Services (Co-Chair)
John Sloan, Consultant in Emergency Medicine (Co-Chair)
Gian Abbott, Consultant Radiologist

Jeni Carden, Assistant Service Manager, Surgery
Joanne Crawley, Principal Pharmacist
Phil Davies, Director of IM&T
Gareth Evans-Jones, Consultant Paediatrician (retired)
Sarah Hoyle, Divisional Manager, Women/Children's Services
Ileene Macaulay, PICC Service Team Leader
Phil Owen, PA to Head of HR (Secretary to Project Board)
Abigail Price, Dietician
Heather Shilliday, Specialist Spinal Practitioner
Ray Thomas, Assistant Director of Finance

Terms of Reference for the Board are currently being drawn up and it is likely that other members of staff may be co-opted to or made full members of the Project Board as the project develops.

Fund Raising

The organising committee of the Trust's Celebration of Achievement event (6th March 2008) agreed that the proceeds of the evening's raffle and auction should go to the Kisiizi project. After totalling up all receipts, over £2,700 has been added to the fund.

The Trust will shortly re-launch the Staff Lottery and it is hoped that some of the proceeds will be nominated by staff or allocated by the Trust to the Kisiizi project fund.

The Trust's Board of Directors will consider a paper at its April meeting which will make proposals to put the project on to a charitable footing. This will allow any equipment purchased for Kisiizi to be VAT exempt and will provide a discrete fund into which all donations, regular or 'one off', can be coded.

Payroll giving schemes, such as 'Pennies from Heaven', will be

explored as a means of allowing those staff who wish to do so to contribute regularly to the project fund.

Scoping Visit

Arrangements are currently being made for a team of six people (all current members of the Project Board) to undertake a 'scoping visit' in July 2008. The team will comprise:-

Dr Gian Abbott, Consultant Radiologist
Joanne Crawley, Principal Pharmacist
Sarah Hoyle, Divisional Manager, Women/Children's Services
Ileene Macaulay, PICC Service Team Leader
Abigail Price, Dietician
Heather Shilliday, Specialist Spinal Practitioner

(A seventh member of the team may be added, pending discussion with University of Chester (School of Nursing) colleagues later this month.)

The logistics of the visit present significant challenges in terms of travel, insurance, immunisation/vaccination, visas and accommodation. The terms of reference for the visit will be established by the Project Board and the visiting team will be expected to produce a comprehensive report of their experiences and investigations during a week-long stay in Uganda.

Equipment and other donations

Whilst acknowledging that the link is to be established for mainly sustainable educational purposes, the Trust continues to investigate the means by which surplus equipment and supplies may be forwarded to Kisiizi, based on an

assessment of need and value. In some cases, the cost of shipping goods to Uganda may be greater than providing cash for local purchase by colleagues at Kisiizi. Complex items of equipment are unlikely to be of value due to a lack of expertise/experience of their use or maintenance. The scoping visit will consider this issue and hence allow the Trust to consider a more specific list of equipment requirements at a point in the future.

General updates

It is intended to provide updates to interested staff on a regular basis, ahead of 'all staff' publicity such as team briefing or 'The Pulse' newsletter. We will develop a Kisiizi project intranet page, onto which reports, photographs and written updates can be entered, so keep an eye open for that development.

If anyone has a question about the link or our intentions for the future, please forward these through Pam Hodgson in the Chief Executive's office.

David Wood
Director of HR & Corporate Services

John Sloan
Consultant in Emergency Medicine

March 2008.