



Hamlin Fistula UK

Newsletter July 2014

Charity
Number:
1153053

The Only UK Charity Exclusively Supporting the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital in Ethiopia

Message from Dr Hamlin:

I am writing to thank those who help our work in many ways. I am so grateful for your kind support and for your concern for our poor patients. They are indeed poor in every sense of the word. Their plight is so dreadful and their lives are now ruined.

But a newsletter should be full of good news! So let me tell of the success of a new family ward for previous patients, now cured and pregnant again and back with us for this event! At present in this ward there are five or six waiting mothers who will need a Caesarean operation. So it is a happy ward, a ward I always enjoy, as I am sure you would too!

Other good news is that our midwifery school is a continued success story. In our antenatal clinic near Haeen the two midwives there did 97 deliveries in one month. So our clinics are becoming popular and the village women really trust the good help they receive from our midwives. This is exciting news and will be the means of helping women who otherwise may be afflicted with an obstructed labour with nobody to help them.

The girls training to be midwives are sent to hospitals for some of their clinical training. One is a Catholic mission hospital almost a day's journey south from Addis Ababa. Our students stay a few weeks and during this time see many abnormal cases. We are thankful for the cooperation of such a good hospital, where the staff are so helpful and kind to their patients. We are very grateful for this clinical training given so generously, and for the way a labouring woman should be cared for. This equips our students with confidence to tackle abnormalities that they will encounter in their clinics and the decisions they have to make when alone in the bush with a difficult labour. We must not forget them, and we will always support them.



Another 90th Birthday picture!
Dr Hamlin with some of her Staff
Photo by Joni Kabana

I had a wonderful party for my birthday in late January, a perfect Friday afternoon. There were several impromptu speeches spoken from the heart, which brought tears to my eyes, especially that from Ato Birru who has been my faithful and constant helper and companion in my house and in jobs too at the hospital, almost since the day we arrived. All my hospital family gathered around as I blew all 90 candles out!

I certainly did not expect such a wonderful party. The few words I spoke were thoughts and encouragement for all the staff to carry on even if I am no longer with them, and to be able to one day see Ethiopia and its pregnant women safe from the affliction of obstetric fistula. May this not be too long before becoming a reality! Until then may all the work we do at this hospital be hallmarked with love. I send you all my love and my sincere thanks for your support in so many ways. *Catherine Hamlin.*

Four of our UK Trustees attended a second 90th Birthday Party for Dr Hamlin in the Spring of this year – a party to end all parties. Among the guests who attended were Government officials, old friends, relatives and various partner organisations from all over the world, midwives, students and staff, who all paid tribute to Dr Hamlin's 90 years on planet Earth and 55 years in Ethiopia. “Emaye” (*‘mother’ - the name her midwifery students call her*) “we all applaud you!”

For her birthday, Dr Hamlin has asked that supporters give much-needed “gifts” for the hospital. Suggestions are: Rolls of fabric and hospital blankets. Fistula operations, Caesarean sections for cured patients, training for midwives and rural midwifery clinics - all these need funding! For more suggestions please go to <http://hamlinfistulauk.org/pages/90thBirthday.htm#>

Maybe a group of you could join together to provide funding for some of the larger items listed.



Dr Hamlin loves flying.

When Dr Hamlin was last in Australia, she paid a visit to her brother in Tamworth. In this photo she can be seen taking off in a two-seater micro-light with her pilot nephew. She was once asked what she thought of Ethiopian Airlines and she answered, “Well, I’ve delivered most of the pilots so they must be ok.”

These two little children often spend time around the patients at one of the Hamlin fistula hospitals in Ethiopia. Their mothers are past patients themselves, now working as nurse aides at the hospital. There's nothing like the giggles of small children to lift the spirits of us all.



Grace and Gratitude!



This photo was taken by Lucy Perry, CEO of our Australian Trust and she says:

"This is one of my favourite patient portraits. This beautiful girl, a fistula patient in Addis Ababa, sat in her bed like this for more than a week. There was a deep sadness about her. She seemed shell-shocked, fragile. I think she was longing for her lost baby. I will never forget her

poise and teary-eyed gratefulness. I had to visit one of our other hospitals and when I came back to Addis a few days later she had been discharged, cured of her horrid fistula. I think of her often."



These healthy twin boys were discharged from the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital with their mother and father who are as proud as punch! Mum will need to come back for further obstetric fistula surgery and she may well have a tough road ahead of her. Grinding poverty, a young family and incontinence may prove to be a challenging time for her. We hope she can be cured when she returns.

What a joy it is to see our patients ready to go home. We give our past obstetric fistula patients a clean, safe birth. To see these young women go home with a live baby in their arms is just the most wonderful sight imaginable.



When you think you're having a hard day and the going gets tough, think of this little cherub, born to a cured obstetric fistula patient. He would not have survived had his mother not been given a clean, safe surgical birth.

On the menu today is the staple diet of injera and wot - a pancake-like bread with either a vegetable or meat stew.



Crafts by Zewditu

Zewditu has been working at the hospital for eight years teaching patients various craft work. Their particular interests are basketwork, embroidery, knitting and making beads to make into attractive pieces of jewellery. While working with the patients in a relaxed atmosphere Zewditu



says they take this opportunity to talk openly about their concerns and worries and this helps them. Before coming to the Addis Ababa Hospital Zewditu worked on a project in a government handicraft scheme with local women and when that project finished she did similar work with the Catholic Church. She loves working here and says it is so rewarding to be



able to teach the patients to do something useful which may enable them to learn a trade and earn some money in the future. At home she has two adult children, a son and a daughter.

Zewditu, showing beautiful basket-work and bead-work made by the patients.

Matron Tenadam

Sadness to joy - a new baby to hold.

After Ejigayehu retired from her position as Matron, Head Nurse Tenadam was promoted to be the new Matron. Tenadam had worked as Head Nurse here at the hospital for 23 years so she easily stepped into the shoes of Ejigayehu. She is a wonderful caring person and is loved by staff and patients alike. Tenadam says all patients arrive hoping for a cure and she advises about their future. After operations patients are in intensive care for two days before being transferred to the main ward. Tenadam says what a joy it is now to see all the new babies with their mothers in the Bethlehem Ward. These returning patients are so happy to be holding and loving their newborn babies after all the heartache and sadness of previously giving birth to a stillborn baby and suffering the humiliation of childbirth injuries.



Patients often arrive at the hospital with other problems. As well as their incontinence, which in some cases can lead to severe infections and ulcerations, patients can suffer from paralysis caused by nerve damage. Sufferers are often subject to severe social stigma, mainly because of their smell. Marriages and friendships break down and women lead isolated lives.

Patient's Story

This scenario is so true for many patients. Dr Hamlin said of one patient, "She lost her baby four years before she came to us, and was left with a fistula in both bladder and rectum. She told us that she lived with her old mother, mostly just sitting in the corner of the small tukul and only going out after dark to try to wash herself with the limited supply of water that was left in the pot. She was afraid to go to the river at night and too ashamed during the day to face ridicule and rejection by the village girls. She told me without hesitation that the worst thing about her life was the loneliness of not being able to mix with others because of the smell and the wetness that was with her constantly.

This girl needed extensive surgery as we had to rebuild her whole urethra, which was totally destroyed during labour. She shyly asked if she would be cured and I could tell her confidently that she would be".

Dr Hamlin continues, "There have been so many other memorable, sometimes shocking cases. There was a woman whose baby had survived the labour which caused her fistula, but the baby was stolen by a hyena. The mother was also attacked and came to us with horrific injuries to her legs, so we treated those injuries and her fistula. She was terribly traumatised".



You may remember reading that Yeshi, who had cared for Dr Hamlin in so many kind ways for many years, died suddenly last year. This photograph is of Zowanesh, a beautiful young lady who is now helping Dr Hamlin in a loving and caring way.

Looking for a challenge?



Fundraise for Hamlin Fistula *

* A trip of a lifetime included.

Your continued support of Hamlin Fistula UK already means a great deal to us, but this year we're delighted to offer you an opportunity to become even more involved with our work – including a visit to the place where it all began.

We're looking for twelve individuals who are able to commit their time and enthusiasm to fundraising for HFUK during 2014/15.

We're asking each participant to raise a minimum of £2,500 in the lead-up to a pre-arranged trip to Ethiopia at

the end of November 2015.

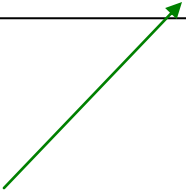
As well as visiting the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital, you'll have the chance to take part in Africa's biggest road race - the 10km Great Ethiopian Run.

At 2,300 metres above sea-level this is no ordinary challenge: Walking or running at altitude alongside more than 37,000 Ethiopians through the streets of sunny Addis, we can assure you an incredible experience you'll never forget as well as a wonderful introduction to the warm and fun-loving spirit of the Ethiopian people. Visit our website at www.hamlinfistulauk.org to find out more about this exciting event and to apply for a place.

Dr Catherine Hamlin has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. The nomination comes from Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for Ethiopia and a long term supporter of Dr Hamlin. It is a great honour and a privilege to be held in such high esteem by the Minister. This is the second time Dr Hamlin has been nominated for this prestigious award; the first time was in 1999.

International Day for Obstetric Fistula : 23rd May

On behalf of millions of women and girls suffering the devastating consequences of obstetric fistula around the globe, we remember them on 23rd May. As this anniversary date approaches we hope to create significant awareness and hopefully much needed extra support for the prevention, management and eventual elimination of obstetric fistula.



As reported on the front cover of our April 2014 newsletter, May 23, was the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula. It is not too late for you to make a contribution to **Hamlin Fistula UK** to help to eradicate obstetric fistula in Ethiopia. We ask that you personally or as a group (and businesses alike) to please consider raising or donating the cost of a standard fistula operation to completely restore one woman's life. It's a big ask but we can't do it without you! It costs £300+ to fund one surgical procedure and hospital stay for each patient who is suffering from these horrific childbirth injuries which have left her incontinent. This is all it costs to change a life for ever so that she can return home with her dignity restored. These young women were horribly injured simply for trying to bring a child into the world. Today you can help change tomorrow for women suffering from this humiliating condition.

Have you read Dr Hamlin's books? If not, you have missed a treat!

Here is an excerpt from 'The Hospital By The River' :

After five long days in labour and a dead baby she most likely spends the rest of her life in misery. But occasionally her story ends with joy. Somehow she hears about the hospital. Somehow she begs the fare or persuades a relative to take her on the long, frightening journey to the unimaginable confusion of the capital. The hospital is quiet and clean and set amongst flowers. People treat her with kindness. She is bathed and experiences the strange luxury of a soft bed with clean sheets. And the miracle she had hardly dared to believe in happens. After a time she returns home, cured, to begin life again". In various versions I have heard Enatanesh's story 20,000 times. Each one is part of my story."

(Dr Hamlin's son says "Mum has one son and about 36,000 daughters!")

All at **Hamlin Fistula UK** thank you for your continuing support. Without your gifts we would not be able to help so many women. Your help gives these women the dignity they deserve and the hope and opportunity to a better life.



If you need a sign to point you in the right direction for your giving, try this one!

Drs. Reginald and Catherine Hamlin came to Ethiopia to work in 1959. They were pioneers in performing surgery for women suffering from obstetric fistula. Once they began this work, the need became so great that in 1974 they established the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital specifically for women with childbirth injuries. Dr Reg. Hamlin died in 1993 but Dr Catherine Hamlin never doubted that the work had to continue. The Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital is an organization that cares for women with childbirth and related injuries. These women come to us destitute, in nothing but their urine soaked clothes, and more often than not, barefoot. Distanced by their relatives, we are their only hope; therefore **all care, treatment and surgery is completely free of charge.**

The Hamlins first came to Birmingham in 1967 on a fundraising tour. Dr Reginald Hamlin lectured at the University of Birmingham, which has a Medical School with an outstanding record as a teaching hospital. The Charity was formed immediately after this visit to support them in their wonderful healing work.

There are many ways you can support us.

A direct gift of cash

A regular gift by 'standing order'

A gift by CAF cheque

Payroll giving

A CAF Card or Credit Card through our secure website– just click on 'Ways of Giving'. There

are special arrangements to give relief from Inheritance Tax on bequests, and from Capital Gains Tax on gifts of shares.

If you wish your contribution to be a Gift Aid donation, please complete and sign the form below and return it to the CEO

Mr Laurence Parkes,
Hamlin Fistula UK, 4 Nimmings Road,
Halesowen, West Midlands, B62 9JJ

Please accept the enclosed donation for the work of the Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital through the Charity **Hamlin Fistula UK**.

Cheque attached £.....

Title..... Forename(s).....

Surname.....

Address.....
.....
.....
.....

If you wish to Gift Aid this donation, please tick and sign below

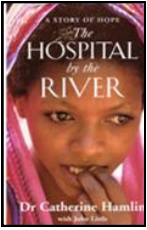
Signature..... Date

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of income tax and/or capital gains tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

***A company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England.
No: 08457433***

Merchandise for Sale

**Please phone office to arrange time for personal
Collections: 0121 559 3999
Orders by post will be despatched on receipt of payment**



Dr Hamlin's first Book "The Hospital by the River"
£5 each (if collected from office) or **by post £8 each**

Qty:Book(s) @ £8.00 (within UK) £



Dr Hamlin's second Book "Catherine's Gift"
£5 each (if collected from office) or **by post £8 each**

Qty:Book(s) @ £8.00 (within UK) £



Logo Lapel Pin
£1.50 each (if collected from office) or **by post in multiples of 4 pins at £7**

Qty:packs of 4 pins @ £7 (within UK) £.....



Hamlin Fistula Key Ring 2 cm diam.
£2.50 each (if collected from office) or **by post in multiples of 4 rings at £11**

Qty:packs of 4 rings @ £11 (within UK) £.....



Notelets **£2.50 per pack of 6 (if collected from office)**

or by post **in multiples of 4 packs of 6 at £12**

Qty: packs of 6 notelets @ £12 (within UK) £.....



“Two for One”

This 16 page soft cover A5 book tells the story of the life of a fistula patient. **£1 each** or **by post -3 copies for 3.50**

Qty: X 3copies @ £3.50

Do you internet shop at Amazon, eBay, John Lewis, Next and many more favourite retailers?

May we suggest that you Register at: <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> and then put it in your Favourites. (Bookmark).

Instead of going directly to Amazon, etc. find the retailer through [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

Click on it and shop.

Remember to say you are supporting **“Hamlin Fistula UK”** - every purchase makes a contribution to the Charity with no additional cost to yourselves. Do investigate it.

