

Welcome to the 13th Friends of Nixon newsletter, bringing you updates from an active year of progress at the Nixon Memorial Hospital, Segbwema, Sierra Leone.

It has been another busy year for Friends of Nixon, as it continues to build on a relationship of strong foundations with the Nixon Memorial Hospital, Segbwema (NMMH). From rehabilitating the Nursing School to equipping a new mortuary, providing new mattresses for the wards, funding enhanced qualifications for nurses and ongoing support for essential medicines, Friends of Nixon continues its mission to serve the Hospital and its surroundings.

In this newsletter...

- News from the hospital
- Visits by trustees
- Nursing School rehabilitation progress
- Arrival of container to Nixon
- New mattresses for hospital wards
- Mortuary progress
- Staff complete SRN training
- Pharmacy and Essential Medicines support
- Ways to supporting Friends of Nixon & Join us for our AGM – further details



Top left, clockwise: Outpatients of NMMH, Under 5's post-natal appointment, Francis Kabba in the Hospital pharmacy – essential medicines supported by FoN, SRN Velma – undertaking an ultrasound scan for a pregnant woman.

Trustees Visit Nixon

During July and August trustees Rob and Janna Burnie, along with their two sons Benjamin and Theo were able to spend some time at Nixon Hospital. The trips aims were to build relationships with stakeholders at the Hospital, including the new Hospital Manager, key leaders of the Hospital Board, Methodist Church and community. They were able to review previously funded projects and observe current projects, as well as provide ongoing training in maternity ultrasound.



Meeting with the Hospital Management, including Medical Superintendent, Surgical CHO, Acting Matron, Hospital Manager, Pharmacist, Laboratory Lead, Finance Manager.



Benjamin and Theo enjoyed visiting friends old and new on their third trip to Segbwema. Once again their blog has documented their trip. If you're interested you can find it at: benjiandtedsafricanadventure.wordpress.com



Dr Robert Burnie concluding a week of refresher ultrasound training with a multi-disciplinary team of midwives, SRN, CHO and doctor.

Shipment to Segbwema arrives!

Over a year ago the Hospital submitted two significant applications to Friends of Nixon. One, for essential equipment required to resource and set up a Skills Lab as part of the re-establishment of the Nixon Nursing School (see page 4) and the other to support the Hospital's and community's desire to have a mortuary based at the hospital.

After months of preparation by the Hospital Manager to list what was required, and extensive research into how to best source the equipment we were able to begin the process.

A company in India were chosen to collate and ship the required equipment, including large mortuary chambers.

Nine months after the initial request the shipment finally arrived in Freetown and was transported up country to Segbwema, by coincidence arriving during the visit of Trustees!

The Skills Lab equipment is in place ready to be set up alongside the other elements necessary for the re-opening of the Nursing School and the Hospital await a qualified mortician to spend time ensuring the safe and accurate set up of the mortuary chambers in the renovated mortuary building. Both Nursing School and Mortuary are looking to be officially opened during 2024.



Amazing team work unloading the shipping container at Nixon Hospital.



Mortuary chambers being transferred to the mortuary.

Striding forward to re-open the Nixon Nursing School

The last year has seen optimistic steps forward in the Hospitals' plans to re-open the Nixon Nursing School. The arrival of the shipping container with equipment to set up the Skills Lab is just one of the requirements set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Council. The classrooms and hostel accommodation have been refurbished and upgraded, including new beds and mattresses, and the security enhanced to ensure the new equipment is stored safely. Earlier this year, the Leone Rock Metal Group approached the Hospital with the offer of upgrading some of the hospital wards; walls have been painted and the floors tiled. As well as this the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone have renovated accommodation to be made available to visiting lecturers. The Hospital Administrator has worked tirelessly to engage with relevant Government Departments, the Nursing and Midwifery Council and other key stakeholders to ensure the essential requirements are in place, including recruitment of lecturers and a Head of School. They expect a visit soon from the Nursing and Midwifery Board to assess their readiness, with the aim of opening in early 2024.



Hospital Manager Augustine Iscandari meeting with members of the Nursing and Midwifery Council



Refurbished learning space



Trustees meeting with Nursing School Planning Committee

Friends of Nixon supports another member of Nixon staff through further professional development

Aminata Swarray studied for her SECHN at Nixon Hospital. She then worked on the wards as well as with the Public Health team, supporting health promotion in the surrounding villages. Aminata wished to further her nursing training by studying to become an SRN (State Registered Nurse). Friends of Nixon provided the funds to support Aminata with both her University fees and other associated costs. After 3 years of studying in Kenema, Aminata has returned to Nixon, working on the wards and sharing her expertise with colleagues. See below for the report Aminata sent to Friends of Nixon as she concluded her studies.

Working as SECHN Nurse at Nixon Memorial Methodist Hospital that constantly address barriers for accessing health care through working with communities and the Ministry of Health, in trying to improve quality health services in Segbwema which is surrounded by poor communities, I have always wanted to build my capacity in order to have the prerequisites to efficiently practice as a trained and qualified medical professional.

I am so grateful to the Hospital for recommending me for a scholarship and its Most valued partner "Friends Of Nixon UK" for accepting its recommendation and awarding me SRN (State Registered Nursing) scholarship. This was a timely response to educational needs and nursing capacity building in the Hospital.

My three years of intense studies and practical has broadened my horizon on patient case management and care, ward administration, access to new procedures and equipment and also gave me an opportunity to come back and contribute to the health improvement efforts made by the hospital in saving lives. I am already serving as a role model to other junior nurses and inspiring them to believe in chasing their dreams with empathy and compassionate care.

However, I will demonstrate and practice with sincere dedication and commitment to serve patients and motivate other colleagues.

I once again want to extend my sincere gratitude to Friends Of Nixon for their immense support both infrastructural and human capacity development (for which I have benefited) to the Nixon Memorial Methodist Hospital.

God Bless Friends Of Nixon UK

Mrs Aminata M. Swaray



Ward Upgrade - Mattresses

Amongst the hospital's efforts to boost the profile of the hospital and improve patient care experiences, it was identified that over half of the mattresses on the wards were in an inadequate state of repair. An application was made to Friends of Nixon to enable the wards to have appropriate hospital-grade mattresses.

After extensive research it appeared that it would be best to source the 50 mattresses required directly from the UK and ship them to Sierra Leone.

To ensure the most cost-effective combination of acquiring the mattresses and transporting them to Sierra Leone, Friends of Nixon had a quick turnaround from agreement to proceed with the application and actioning it.

Although not an anticipated outgoing this financial year, the trustees were unanimous in the value of this truly patient-centred project and concluded that with enhanced fundraising efforts over the coming year we could both meet the need quickly and recover otherwise allocated reserves. All expenses included, each mattress costs £250, a total of around £12,000 in all.

We are therefore extremely grateful to all the Methodist Churches that have taken on this project. From, individual donations to 'Bake for Beds' coffee mornings, we are so appreciative of all the support received to date.

We are pleased to share that the first shipment of just over half the required mattresses arrived at the end of August with the second shipment arriving a month or so after.

If you feel you are able to donate or hold a fundraising event towards this amazing project, we would love to hear from you!



Mattresses currently in use



First shipment of mattresses arrive at Nixon Hospital.



New mattresses being set up on wards.



Laboratory Services

The lab at Nixon continues to offer a range of diagnostic tests for patients. A new Government-funded laboratory technician, Ayia Siaffa, has been working closely with trustee Michaela Fitzpatrick-Milton to assess the current resources and consider areas that FoN can best support in the future.

Essential Medicines

Friends of Nixon continues to provide funding twice a year towards essential medicines that are not supplied by Government free healthcare schemes. This ensures a consistent supply of quality medications is available to patients at the hospital.



Voluntary Medics

Nixon Hospital would warmly welcome any healthcare professionals that would like to spend time working alongside the hospital's workforce. If this interests you or anyone you know, please get in contact.

Thank you for your continued support!

We are immensely grateful for the generous support we receive from individuals, trusts, groups and churches. We could not continue to support the hospital without you!

If you wish to donate either on a regular basis by **standing order** or a **one off donation**

please contact our treasurer Robert Dixon *11a Denbigh Road, London, W11 2SJ*
robertdixonfon@gmail.com OR **donate directly**

Friend of Nixon Memorial Hospital, Lloyds Bank Sort code 30-97-41

Acc. No. 02687413 and please remember to **Gift Aid** if you are eligible (see form below).

To donate online, our provider is Wonderful: <https://wonderful.org/charities/1145455>

For general enquiries or to discuss the possibility of a trustee speaking on the charity's work please contact our Secretary, Janna Burnie – janna141@hotmail.com

Join us to hear more at our
AGM
Saturday 25th November
2023

Notting Hill Methodist Church
240, Lancaster Road, London, W11 4AH
12.30pm Arrival & Reception
1.00pm Buffet Lunch
2.00pm. to 4.00pm Meeting
Please let us know if you can attend:
Email janna141@hotmail.com



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To qualify for Gift Aid what you pay in Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax must be at least equal to the amount that will be reclaimed this tax year.

Email: Robert.dixon@hotmail.com

Post: Friends of Nixon Attn. R. Dixon, 11a Denbigh Road London W11 2SJ

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