

Welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> Friends of Nixon newsletter. As we celebrate 10 years as a registered charity, we bring you an update on the projects the Friends of Nixon have been supporting at the Nixon Memorial Hospital over the last year. You can find further information about our 10 year celebration and AGM later in this newsletter.

Over the last year Nixon Memorial Hospital has seen a number of changes. The collaborative approach between the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone, the Government, and the Christian Health Association in Sierra Leone (CHASL) has supported the new hospital management in leading the hospital into its next chapter of supporting the community surrounding Segbwema.



Photos above – Training taking place at Nixon Memorial Hospital, developing and enhancing the current skills of the Nursing staff.

### In this newsletter...

- News from the hospital
- Updates from the Laboratory and new microscope
- Pharmacy and Essential Medicines support
- Village water wells completion
- Electricity supply progress
- Mortuary – new project
- Staff training and development
- Nursing School Rehabilitation
- Ways to supporting Friends of Nixon & Join us for our 10 year celebration!

## Well-come!

After a few set backs, we are pleased to report that the second community well funded by FoN was completed earlier this year. It is a much welcomed addition to the village of Waiima and is now in constant use.



## Staff Training

Staff working at the hospital are regularly offered the opportunity to further their studies. Over the last 10 years, FoN has supported the training of midwives, SRNs (State Registered Nurses) and CHOs (Community Health Officers). All these individuals have returned to the hospital after their studies to apply their new skills, offering enhanced care to the patients it provides for. Currently, FoN are supporting a nurse, in her final year of the SRN qualification as well as another member of staff in his second year of CHO training.



Vaindi Moigua – currently undertaking CHO training at Njala University



# Project Updates

## Essential Medicines

For a number of years now Friends of Nixon has supported the pharmacy to maintain a consistent supply of quality essential medication for its patients. Liaising with a reputable pharmacy in Freetown has become a secure and direct way of doing this. With collaborative working with Government schemes, some medication for specific groups of patients are now supplied to the hospital through various national programmes. With these additional sources becoming more reliable, the charity has been able to reduce the amount provided for the acquisition of medicines. We will continue to monitor this alongside the hospital management and review annually.



## Ward & Consultation Rooms Renovations

Ensuring the hospital is well presented and provides a welcoming environment is key to ensuring patient engagement. Friends of Nixon agreed to respond to an application from the hospital for funds to decorate the consultation rooms and wards. As often these areas are the first point of contact for new patients, looking fresh and hygienic will contribute to ensuring patients feel at ease and confident in the care they may receive.



## Power Supply Progress

Friends of Nixon's commitment to ensuring a consistent and reliable power supply to the hospital has continued this year. Following on from a new generator being installed last year and the assessment and overhaul of the solar field, we have now funded the addition of a 'solar midnight controller'. This device will increase the efficiency of the system, allowing for optimal output. The impact on patient care and the community of having this power supply in place is massive. Friends of Nixon will continue to ensure that appropriate maintenance and review of the whole system takes place on a regular basis.



Above – new solar midnight controller being received by members of hospital staff.

Right – controller installed and working.

Below – solar field on the hospital site.



# Developments in the Hospital Laboratory –

## Blood Glucose Monitoring Services

Friends of Nixon recently sourced and shipped a further years supply of blood glucose test strips to the hospital to ensure this basic service of checking a patients blood sugar can be consistently provided. The service has also recently been provided during outreach clinics in surrounding villages where blood pressure and diabetes screening were offered.

## A new microscope arrives - The Binocular Olympus Microscope

*Michaela Fitzpatrick-Milton, Trustee of Friends of Nixon describes the new microscope and the benefits to laboratory services*

Microscopic examination remains the gold standard for laboratory confirmation of malaria and is used to determine the presence of malaria parasites in the patient's blood. A blood sample is collected and spread as a thick or thin blood smear, stained with a Romanovsky stain (most often Giemsa), and examined with a 100X oil immersion objective. Visual criteria are used to detect malaria parasites and, when possible, differentiate various species. The diagnosis is initially made by detecting parasites in the thick smear. The thin smear is then used to determine the malaria species and the parasitemia, or the percentage of the patient's red blood cells infected with malaria parasites. This information helps to guide initial treatment decisions.

Previously, the lab used cassette format, Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) to diagnose malaria. These tests provide results in 2-15 minutes and offer a useful alternative to microscopy in situations where reliable microscopic diagnosis is not available. However they provide limited information as they only detect whether the malaria parasite is present or not (qualitative). Microscopy offers additional qualitative and quantitative information useful in guiding the treatment of patients with malaria. Previously, the lab at Nixon hospital had only one microscope that was not capable of analysing malaria smears. Purchase of the Binocular Olympus Microscope has made examination of thick and thin blood smears possible and has significantly improved the overall diagnostic capacity of the laboratory.





## Upcoming Projects at Nixon Hospital supported by Friends of Nixon

Friends of Nixon has committed to two major projects over the next year...



### **Building a Hospital Mortuary**

For many years, the hospital has been keen to develop a fully functioning and refrigerated mortuary to ensure dignity can continue to be provided for patients who receive end-of-life care at the hospital and do not recover. Having such a facility will be also be central in maintaining infection prevention and control measures that were so tragically highlighted by the Ebola epidemic. Now with a reliable and consistent electricity supply in place, an application has been approved by Friends of Nixon to fund the equipment and labour required to construct a 10 chamber mortuary. Currently the equipment is in the process of being procured and shipped to Sierra Leone. As the project progresses we will share further details.

### **Enabling the re-opening of the Nixon Nursing School**

The Nixon Nursing School was once a thriving hub of students eager to learn and develop their skills within the hospital before taking up posts supporting healthcare in the community. Since the SECHN nursing qualification was disbanded several years ago the Nursing School has made a number of attempts to acquire the resources and staffing required to offer the higher level SRN (State-Registered Nurse) qualification. With a newly established and pro-active management in place, a final push is underway to enhance Nixon's offer as a well-equipped and well-regarded Nursing School. With a keen interest in education, Friends of Nixon are funding the development of a skills lab and the rejuvenation of the learning environment as part of the wider process of enabling the reopening of the Nixon Nursing School.



# Get involved!

There are many ways to get involved in supporting the hospital, including in person. If you, or someone you know are a medical professional and are interested in spending some time volunteering at the hospital, get in touch! See details below...

## Nixon Memorial Hospital, Segbwema, Sierra Leone

### Medical Opportunity Advertisement: Medical Doctor

Applications are sought for the post of a Medical Doctor at Nixon Memorial Hospital, Segbwema, Sierra Leone. A minimum of 2 years post-graduate medical experience is required (Completion of UK foundation Programme or equivalent) together with full registration with the GMC or equivalent. Experience in obstetrics, paediatrics and emergency medicine is desirable as is some experience of working in a low resource setting or an insight into tropical medicine.

**About the hospital:** Nixon Memorial Hospital is a mission hospital in rural eastern Sierra Leone, approximately 330km from Freetown. It serves an estimated population of 30,000 providing daily outpatient and 24 hour inpatient care across 5 wards including paediatrics and maternity. It has a functioning operating theatre and laboratory offering basic investigations. It continues on a programme of rehabilitation and progress after its destruction during the Sierra Leone civil conflict which ended in 2002. It was briefly closed during the Ebola Epidemic which impacted significantly upon the hospital, as it did all health services in Sierra Leone. However since the end of the epidemic the hospital has continued to make progress in providing much needed care to its local population and has benefited from a solar project giving the hospital 24 hour electricity. It is currently staffed by one Sierra Leonean doctor and a Community Health Officer supported by a small nursing team voluntary overseas medics.

**The role:** Will include provision of inpatient and outpatient clinical care across medical specialities, although there is scope for the successful applicant to additionally focus and potentially lead care on an area of particular interest.

The opportunity will enable the successful candidate to:

- Gain exposure to, and develop skills in managing, common tropical diseases.
- Improve clinical skills and decision making in a low resource setting with minimal laboratory investigations or imaging support.
- Gain leadership skills and management skills through working with a multi-disciplinary team of nurses, midwives and students and being part of the hospital's management team, overseeing the day to day running of the hospital and its strategic development.
- Develop teaching skills and experience.
- Develop clinical improvement processes, protocol or guidelines in their area of interest.
- Play a role in guiding and assisting the re-development of the hospital to meet the needs of its community.

**Remuneration:** The post is voluntary. A bursary of up to £3000 can be awarded to the successful candidate to contribute towards flights and living costs. Accommodation is provided free of charge as is transport from Freetown to the hospital on arrival.

Registration with the Medical and Dental Council of Sierra Leone is required and can be organized on arrival in country on production of original medical qualifications.

**Duration:** Applicants should be able to commit for a minimum of 6 months.

**Start date:** Flexible

**Opportunities may also be available for nursing and midwifery professionals, especially those with an interest in education or management.**

**To apply** or for further information please contact Dr Robert Burnie

Email: [Robert.burnie@doctors.org.uk](mailto:Robert.burnie@doctors.org.uk) Mobile: (+44) 07742765819

(Chair, Friends of Nixon Memorial Hospital, Segbwema, Sierra Leone (UK registered charity no.1145455))

*Join us to celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at our AGM*

Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Notting Hill Methodist Church

240, Lancaster Road, London, W11 4AH

12.30pm Arrival & Reception

1.00pm Buffet Lunch

2.00pm. to 4.00pm Meeting



## *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

/Robert.dixon@hotmail.com OR

donate directly to 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 Givey, please follow the following link:

<https://www.givey.com/friendsofnixonmemorialhospitalsegbwema>

For general enquiries or to discuss the possibility of a trustee speaking on the charity's work please contact our Chair Dr Robert Burnie - [robert.burnie@doctors.org.uk](mailto:robert.burnie@doctors.org.uk)

### SINGLE GIFT AID DECLARATION

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and authorise *Friends of Nixon Memorial Hospital* to reclaim the tax through Gift Aid on my donation of £.....

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Address:.....

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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](mailto:Robert.dixon@hotmail.com)

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

## Gift Aid

Gift Aid enables charities such as Friends of Nixon to claim an additional 25% of a donation made.

Whether you wish to make a one-off donation or set up a standing order and are eligible to, please ensure you have completed a Gift Aid Declaration Form, either using this form or contacting our Treasurer, Robert Dixon for further assistance.