



Ashers In Africa

Medical and Technical Advisors to Christian Health Association of Sierra Leone

July 2015

Volume 7 Issue 1

Prayer Requests:

- Safety for Drs. Tom and Karen as they travel back to Sierra Leone
- Donations to come in for Solar match
- Relief from Ebola and prayers for the people of Sierra Leone as they rebuild their families, community and country
- Wisdom as we learn our new role in administration at Panguma Hospital and continue our work with Chasl.
- Prayers for recovery for Coleen Szyskowski and wisdom for her doctors as they treat her.

Medical Supplies, layettes, sewing cards and bandages can be mailed to :

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Toledo, Ohio 43612

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In this issue:

Ebola is almost over 1

Solar and matching grants 2

Lab training 2

Changes in shipping supplies 2

Ebola in Sierra Leone is nearly contained! Praise the Lord!

It has been a long time since I have communicated with you. Quite frankly, it was because I didn't know what to say, Ebola has devastated the country of Sierra Leone, and at the same time it has put it in the minds and prayers of people all over the world. Our organization, WAEMM has been active in helping the country. Over the last year, we have helped send eight 40 ft., containers and two airlift shipments of supplies and medications. For the faith based hospitals and clinics this has been a God send, as most of the humanitarian aid was kept only for the government institutions. The Ashers have been back to Sierra Leone for two months this spring just after the peak of the infections, and then had to remain in observation for three weeks in Florida upon return. During that time in Sierra Leone, the doctors had meetings with the town of Panguma. The community leaders and the Catholic Church gave the management and leadership of Panguma Hospital to Drs. Asher and WAEMM. The doctors also spent many hours helping the staff at CHASL sort out the medical equipment that had been sent and arranged for the supplies to be picked up or distributed to the clinics and hospitals.. They also led workshops for the clinics and hospitals on lab equipment that allowed the clinics to do hemoglobins and blood sugars and allowed the hospitals to do these tests plus complete blood counts and many serum chemistries. It is hard for us to believe here, but nearly all the 12 hospitals were unable to do basic laboratory tests because they had no machines or reagents to do the tests. We were able to get 5 hospital labs up and running and will do the rest of the 12 hospitals when we return to Sierra Leone in late summer. We were also able to stock the CHASL office with the supplies and reagents to continue doing testing after the initial supplies have been used.

Ebola has affected our work in Sierra Leone in so many ways. As long as there are new active cases we won't be taking any medical students for rotations. Also due to the Ebola it is unlikely that many doctors will volunteer to come with us in Sierra Leone. We lost so many nurses and doctors at our CHASL institutions that the hospitals are struggling to continue providing services. The educations programs to the public that encouraged coming to the hospitals need to be reinforced as so many people fear the hospitals now. Our solar installation programs were put on hold but are again up and running. Our scholarship programs are again running with one new nurse and one new CHO in training now. Our other students are again back in school. In light of these situations, and with the guidance of the board of WAEMM we have changed our focus a bit. Our goal has not changed, WAEMM and the Ashers still want to see the quality of the medical care in Sierra Leone improve while maintaining the Christian evangelism at our institutions. To achieve this in this post-Ebola period we will continue sending supplies, continue funding scholarships, continue raising matching money for the solar program, continue training at CHASL hospitals and clinics. The doctors will spend 4 –6 months in Sierra Leone each year to do teaching and to work in some of the hospitals to give the doctors much needed rest time. We will not be taking medical students or teams to Sierra Leone until we are certain it is safe to do so. While in the US, Dr, Tom will be working for Medexpress to help supplement the Asher's support and to raise money for the WAEMM programs. Dr. Karen will be assisting Kate Wesolowski as she takes over the warehouse in Toledo, and will be assisting the two interns that are working with WAEMM from Lourdes College in Sylvania, Ohio and will be speaking with churches and organizations who will help raise money for the solar and scholarship programs. Although we would like to be in Sierra Leone full time, at this time we feel we can be more help to the people by working here part of the year.

In our prayer requests you see a special request for Coleen Szyskowski. Coleen and Mike have served faithfully in the warehouse and on the road collecting supplies for Sierra Leone. She has recently had some health problems that prohibit her from continuing the work. We thank them both for their generous service and pray for healing for Coleen. We would ask that you join us in these prayers.

Solar Power in Panguma and many others



Teaching lab techniques to the hospital personnel.

Many will remember that over a year ago WAEMMs donors provided money to install a basic solar program at Panguma Hospital, similar to what what installed in Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital. The system has worked well and has saved many lives. Since that time WAEMM with some other partners in Sierra Leone applied for a grant from the European Union to put solar in hospitals and clinics in Sierra Leone. We were granted that matching grant. For every dollar that WAEMM can raise for this project, the European Union will put in four dollars. This project will put very large solar programs in at Panguma Hospital and at Nixon Hospital. These will be large enough to provide the hospital with all the power it needs and also to sell electric to the community for development in the community. This money will provide an income to the hospital to make it self sufficient. The 10 clinics that will also get solar programs will also get various income generating programs, like refrigerators, water bagging plants and cell phone charging systems to generate a small bit of income to support the clinic and the repair and replacing of the system. We would like to see these systems become an example of how hospitals and clinics can be run. It is important that the institutions from CHASL work toward becoming independent financially. These solar programs are a big step in this direction. If you feel led to, please donate toward these matching funds either by mail to WAEMM or through the website at

Five Hospitals and Five Clinics with lab abilities

We are pleased to announce that Kamakwie Wesleyan Hospital, St. John of God Hospital, Kissy UMC Hospital, Nixon Hospital and Panguma Hospital lab personnel have completed the training at the CHASL office in QBC, Reflotron, Glucometer and Hemastat II . They received their instruments and supplies from WAEMM and CHASL in February and have begun patient testing. Each hospital will get a few days additional training at their facilities to make sure the equipment is running properly and to iron out any problems they may have at their center. This training will be scheduled during the Ashers next trip. In addition, all supplies have been stocked at the CHASL office so testing can go on without interruption. These are basic tests that make a big difference in the diagnostic ability of the doctors and CHOs who are caring for the patients. This will certainly improve medical care.

Kate has volunteered to oversee the warehouse!

We are so thankful for all the work that Coleen and Mike Szyskowski did in getting supplies ready to send to Sierra Leone. They put untold numbers of miles in picking up supplies and hours packing them. Then they helped load them to be sent out by Brothers Brother in Pittsburg or Christian Relief and UMC in Mechanicsburg. When Coleen was no longer able to help with this, we considered closing the warehouse as we didn't know anyone who could take this on. But the Lord always knows better than we do. Kate Wesolowski volunteered to head up this project. Her contact information is on the first page of this newsletter. You can contact her through email, phone and text. Mailed items can be sent to her home address and she will see that they get packed in the warehouse. We are so thankful for her volunteering. She would love to have some of you volunteer and hour or two. Give her a call if you are nearby and have some spare time. Thanks!

Save the date!

The first annual Sierra Leone "Winds of improvement" event is coming November 14th at 7PM at the Hampton Inn in Toledo, Ohio. If you can join us save the date for an evening of good food, good friendship and good news of change coming to Sierra Leone.

May God Bless you and yours!

Every day we pray for you, our prayer and financial supporters. We are very aware that none of this would be possible without you and we are so very thankful. God bless you! Drs. Thomas and Karen Asher

Check out the web page over the next few weeks. Thanks to Katherine at Web and IT group. It looks great!

www.waemm.com

We're on the Web!

www.waemm.com

Donations can be made through the web site or by mailing contributions to WAEMM