

K.M.F. Newsletter

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Apr - Jun 2022



What's inside?

MS Comments
What's happening? - Reports of activities in the hospital
Community Outreach
KMF Staff activities
Specialty consultations
Plans / Needs in KMF
Prayer points and YOUR involvement in the work of KMF

K.M.F. Newsletter (April – June 2022)

The KMF Newsletter is a quarterly collection of stories and news about KMF and its work. The newsletter is aimed at those interested in the story of this hospital and the initiative to revive it, that it may be a faithful witness in the community it seeks to serve. Please do keep the work of KMF in prayer.

MS Comments:

Greetings from KMF.

As the hospital continues to develop, one of the aspects we are focusing on is training of staff. People with chronic illnesses and disability is a major unmet need in the Nilgiris. As part of the community outreach, KMF is looking to meet these needs by training and upskilling nurses, doctors and technicians in these areas. We are doing this with the help of experts in CMC Vellore and we are thankful to the consultants, nurses and others who are helping with this.

The community outreach program is being planned and the small team led by Dr. Miriam has started outreach efforts in the form of home visits and camps. We are thankful to those who contributed towards the ambulance which helps with this and transport of patients at a low cost. We are also grateful for the consultants in CMC Vellore who take the effort and time to provide expert consultations despite their busy schedules and constraints. KMF is a charitable institution and we are very grateful to all who have contributed generously towards buying instruments, machines and other equipment.

As the hospital grows, there are growing challenges too of various kinds. We request your prayers in this regard that the ministry of the hospital ultimately glorifies His name as we serve in love.

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him and he will do this – He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of you cause like the noonday sun. Psalm 37: 5,6

Dr. Tony Abraham Thomas
Medical Superintendent, KMF Hospital

What's happening in KMF ?

BLS / CPR training



Basic and advanced Life Support (BLS and ACLS) training was conducted for the staff on 8th and 9th of April by a team led by Dr. Ebor Jacob, Dr. Sandeep from Vellore. All nurses and doctors and drivers of



KMF underwent this training which included resuscitation skills in adults and infants, cardiac resuscitation, intraosseous line insertion and intubation among other skills. We are very thankful to the team that conducted this and we hope that this

will be of significant use to the community we serve in the Nilgiris.

Obstetric services

Full-time obstetrics and gynecology services were started from April 2022 thanks to Dr. Kiruba V. who joined the team. She was trained in CMC Vellore and under her leadership, regular antenatal check-ups for pregnant women, deliveries and gynecological consultations have started. Dr. Beulah Samuel continues to provide part-time Gynecology services and does ultrasound scans.

Nurses day celebrations

Nurses Day was celebrated with a week-long series of competitions for the nurses and health auxiliaries led by Mrs. Glory Ashok and Mrs. Sintha Roseline. Poster-making, dance and skit, academic quiz, slogan-writing etc. were some of the events which saw enthusiastic participation in a spirit of healthy competition. This culminated in a Nurses Day function held on 13th of May graced by Mrs. Lillian Jayaprakash, former nurse from CMC Vellore as Chief guest where prizes were distributed and the ideals of the nursing profession were revisited.



Secondary Hospital programme (SHP) for medical students

The secondary hospital programme for medical students is conducted by CMC Vellore to provide an experience to mission hospitals and secondary care in the country. Usually, it is a three week posting based on the clerkship model with exposure to community programmes. The SHP-2 programme was suspended for the past 2 years in view of the COVID-19 pandemic and was restarted this year.

As part of the SHP this year, 6 students medical students (2nd clinical year, Batch of 2019) spent a week in KMF from 15th to 21st of May. The students were given a schedule and posted in various departments during the week they were here, with one day for a community visit and time for fun and a display of their talents. They were an enthusiastic and sincere bunch and we enjoyed their visit very much. It is our hope that their time has sensitized them to the working of a peripheral hospital and was useful to them.



Free ambulance pick-up



Reaching the hospital from home is a major difficulty for many people in the hilly terrain of the Nilgiris. KMF has made the ambulance service free of charge for pick-up from home to hospital for medical emergencies with a dedicated phone number for this purpose.

KMF Community Outreach

Community programme



Reaching out to the communities in the villages in and around Kotagiri has been an integral part of KMF's vision and mission. Dr. Miriam George, a public health expert joined our team in March and has initiated visits to villages, especially those in remote locations to assess the needs related

to health. We hope to train young women in the community to be health workers in their own villages and use the existing health infrastructure, both private and government based, to improve health in the Nilgiris, especially among those who are not reached by anyone.

The community health team has been building connections with various local and regional organizations as well as frontline workers to build a system for care especially for the Irula and Kurumba tribal communities in Kotagiri block.

Palliative care weekly training is being carried out in partnership with CMC Palliative care that has been extended to our staff as well as the local Palliative care team since April.

Dr Beulah, who is a gynaecologist, had a very interactive health promotion session with the women students of KPS college on menstrual health on the 6th of April.

Eye camps have been restarted after a break of a few years. On 30th June, Dr Noela along with Dr Jane's team conducted an eye camp in Mettukal. With the support of the village head, ASHA and VHN many were mobilized for the camp; and those requiring reading glasses were given them, those with cataracts and low vision were identified and planned for follow-up care. We also had two MSW students from Loyola College, Chennai intern with us.

Home-based care programme

There are several individuals, especially older people and those with chronic illnesses who are at home and unable to travel to the hospital due to the hilly terrain and other reasons. The need for home visits by trained personnel is thus, a need that will benefit many in the Nilgiris.

been extended free of charge to poor patients that come to the hospital and as well as for those that have been referred to us by various frontline workers.

Rehabilitation only hospital visits have also been started for some of these patients that required intensive therapy.



Eye camps under DBCS

KMF has been approved by the DBCS (District Blindness Control Society) to conduct eye camps and do free cataract surgeries for the poor under the government scheme.

The eye team has done one practice camp on June 30th and we plan to start the regular camps from July.

Dr. Noela, CMC Alumnus from the batch of 1988, and a community ophthalmologist looking after the Aborigine community in Australia was with us for a month and was very helpful in planning the camps and the community ophthalmology in KMF.



Tea estate clinics

Tea estates are a common sight in the Nilgiris and workers in these estates form a significant part of the workforce. This includes a sizable migrant worker population who have no access to credible healthcare. KMF has started reaching out to these people since December 2021 through two regular tea estate clinics on Monday and Friday afternoons.

Pediatric camp – 30th June 2022

A free camp for children was held on 30th of June 2022 in Coonoor in association with the Kinder Trust. Dr. Koshy George, our pediatrician led the team that screened children for various illnesses. Those that require further treatment are referred to KMF or an appropriate higher center.

KMF Staff Activities!

Farewell for Dr. Ria and Dr. Gayathri



Dr. Ria J. worked as a junior medical officer for 8 months and left for further studies in May. Dr. Gayathri, who served as a junior medical officer for one year after her MBBS, left KMF in the month of June. During their farewell programme, staff expressed their gratitude for their sincere service.

Staff training - Microbiology

As a part of continuous upskilling and education, three laboratory technicians from KMF were sent to CMC for training in microbiology techniques. We are thankful to the Department of Microbiology in Vellore for facilitating this.

Palliative care training

Training of staff for palliative care is being once a week led by Dr. Jennifer Jeba and Mrs. Shakila M. from the Palliative care department of CMC Vellore. The classes are attended by KMF staff and staff from the Government Palliative unit. This is the first step in planning for palliative and chronic illness care, which is a major need in the Nilgiris.

Specialty Consultations

Vascular surgery and general surgery consultation (June 10,11)



The burden of varicose veins and complications like large leg ulcers is great in the Nilgiris because of a large number of tea workers who stand for long periods and their visits have a significant impact on those suffering from these illnesses.

A team of vascular surgeons, anesthetists and technicians visited KMF for a consultation in November 2021 and then on June 10,11th, 2022 led by Dr. Prabhu Premkumar. Besides consultations, Doppler scans and Endovascular laser surgeries were performed for those with varicose veins.

Disability and rehabilitation training

The care of people with various disabilities is an unmet need in the Nilgiris. Dr. Judy from CMC Vellore has kindly agreed to help in training staff for this purpose and weekly online consultations to discuss patients with rehabilitation needs has started since June. It is our dream that a full-fledged rehabilitation center can be set up soon.

Academic sessions

Dr. Balamugesh and Dr. Barney from the department of Pulmonary medicine and Dr. Regi Thomas from ENT have been involved in academic classes for the doctors during their visits.



Dr. Sukria Nayak from the department of Surgery in Vellore was also present and helped supervise two gynecology surgeries during this time. His presence was a source of encouragement and support to Dr. Kirubah and Dr. Beulah who did the surgery.

Plastic surgery (June 10,11)

Dr. Ashish Gupta, professor and head of Department of Plastic Surgery in CMC Vellore saw patients with cleft lip and other anomalies over two days and helped Dr. Kamalakar with some surgical procedures.

ENT and audiometry (Monthly)

Regular monthly visits by Dr. Regi Thomas, professor in Department of ENT in CMC Vellore are held on the first Wednesday and Thursday of each month. Ms. Joanna, an audiologist accompanies him during each visit to do the hearing tests. We hope to have a full-time ENT surgeon and audiologist in a few months.

Urology (Monthly)

Dr. Ganesh Gopalakrishnan, retired professor of Urology, CMC Vellore has been conducting a Urology consultation every month. Patients with urological illnesses undergo diagnostic urethroscopy and surgical procedures during these visits.

Rheumatology (Monthly)

The Rheumatology department of CMC Vellore led by Dr. John Mathew has resumed consultations KMF

from March 2022 (second Saturday of each month). They see local as well as follow-up patients from Erode and Coimbatore.

Human interest stories - The impact of KMF

A tale of two sisters

Rasathi* and Muniamal* are sisters from an Irula community about 25 kms from the hospital. They studied till middle school and had to discontinue to help their parents as daily wage workers to provide for the family. Rasathi got married and soon after lost her first baby close to term. She became pregnant again and was pre-eclamptic but she refused to go to the hospital as she was referred to Ooty and then Coimbatore.



Meanwhile, Muniamal had delivered a healthy baby boy Ramesh* ,at the government hospital but she suffered from post-partum depression. 45 days after birth Ramesh's weight had dropped from 2.2kgs at birth to 1.9 kgs. He was severely malnourished, with failure to thrive. They both also had scabies. Susan, our optometrist with a heart for the community, had heard of their situation and informed our team that mobilized them and was able to bring them in a week later. It took some convincing because she was initially very hesitant to get treatment of any kind. Ramesh was admitted in the Neonatal ICU of KMF Hospital and was started on 2 hourly feeds and supportive treatment.



Muniamal was started on anti-depressants and nutritious food; she got better in a few days and her mother also helped to attend to Ramesh who was admitted for 2 weeks in the Neonatal ICU. She gradually became better with the treatment and was also able to feed her son by herself. Ramesh slowly gained weight, his overall condition improved and we finally took the family back home.

Meanwhile Rasathi also delivered a healthy baby boy at home; however she was extremely anaemic and needed 2 units of blood. This was another struggle as our hospital does not have a blood storage unit and they were not comfortable with being referred to any facility nearby. However, after much mobilization she was admitted in the government hospital in Mettupalayam and got better. Both mothers and children are doing well. It was a joy to the entire team to see the family in good health.



It is often a challenge to ensure good healthcare to those in remote villages. The hilly terrain, vast distances and financial deprivation are just some causes, compounded further by a lack of understanding regarding the need for seeking healthcare when required. We are thankful to those who donated towards the charity fund and the Neonatal ICU which helped us to provide much needed care to these families.

Brain tumour surgery

Fourteen-year-old Vivek* came to KMF with multiple seizures over many years and double vision. He had been diagnosed earlier to have a very large brain tumour which was operated once without much improvement in his condition. An MRI scan showed that the tumour had grown so large that it occupied almost one half of his brain and his life was potentially in danger if this was not tackled immediately. Hailing from a very remote village in the Nilgiris, and with very limited financial resources, his father had delayed surgery for a long time. He was sent to us by the Keystone foundation and it was very clear that he had to be operated without delay. He was referred to CMC Vellore and the tumour was removed following a surgery by a team led by Dr. Ranjith Moorthy in the Neurosurgery Department.



The post operative period was stormy but he managed to pull through. It was thrilling to see Vivek smiling and in good health when he visited KMF for a follow-up after a month. The surgery was done free of cost and today he is able to function fairly normally. It is our hope that he will continue to improve and be able to live a normal healthy life.

Surviving a devastating stroke

It came as a sudden and unpleasant surprise to Mr. Selvakumar's* wife to see her husband unable to talk and move his right arm and leg one morning. The extended family lives in a hut in a remote village in the Nilgiris sustaining themselves with daily-wage labour. Unable to understand the situation and with limited financial resources, they kept him at home for 3 days before deciding to bring him to KMF. It was heart-breaking to know that they did not even have the resources to pay the taxi that brought them to the hospital.

Selvakumar had a massive stroke which paralysed one side of the body and left him unable to speak and even to comprehend speech. He was initiated on treatment which included rigorous physiotherapy to help him walk. There



was gradual improvement in his speech and he was able to stand with support thanks to the sustained efforts of the nurses who looked after him and Anjana, our physiotherapist and the medical team. He was dropped off to his home and the Community Health team led by Ms. Miriam plans to follow him up in his village as he will continue to need support. We are thankful to those who contributed to the charity fund which enabled us to provide his treatment free of cost and to Microland company which donated the ambulance which enables us to pick up and drop patients for treatment.



(*all names have been changed)

Plans for the immediate future / Needs in the hospital

The following are some of the needs of the hospital that we are working on with an approximate cost. As a charitable hospital, we manage the daily running expenses independently but we are dependent on contributions to invest in equipment to upgrade the services provided. Those interested in contributing financially to the hospital are encouraged to contact the medical superintendent.

1. **Blood storage centre** – The need for blood, especially in an emergency situation is something we are planning to address. Currently we are planning to start a blood storage centre. This will involve renovating building space for the centre and purchasing equipment and obtaining licences from the regulating authorities.
2. **NABH** – We are in the process of planning for NABH which is a mark of quality of service. Though it appears daunting, we hope to achieve this in about a year.
3. **Equipment needed** – Horizontal autoclave for sterilizing instruments (Approx. Rs. 6 lakh), Orthopedic instruments (Approx. Rs. 4 lakh), Hospital beds (Approx. Rs. 75,000 each)
4. **General surgeon needed** – On short-term or long term or visiting basis.

KMF Hospital contact details

Telephone

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How can you be involved in KMF's revival?

You too can be a part of KMF in the following ways:

1. **Pray** - See prayer points below.
2. **Participate** - Visit us for a holiday, as a volunteer or join us!
3. **Contribute** - For those wishing to contribute financially, bank account details are given below.
Account Name - KOTAGIRI MEDICAL FELLOWSHIP HOSPITAL Account no. - 1958914021
IFSC code - CBIN0281010 MICR – 643016302CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA, KOTAGIRI, Savings account

Prayer points

1. **Hospital activities and staff** - Please pray that all that we do as a community will be done with the love of God and a spirit of unity, thus being a witness to Him who works within us. Please pray for some staff struggling with illnesses.
2. **Protection and wisdom** –Pray that we will have the wisdom to make the right decisions so that the staff are protected and the services of the hospital continue.
3. **Finances** – Pray for wisdom to use our finances wisely as we purchase equipment and expand the activities of the hospital.

Support, Finances and funding

The revival of KMF hospital is an endeavor shared by not just the staff, but by a wider network of donors and well-wishers who pray and 'hold the ropes'. A big thank-you to all individual supporters who have given generously - the work goes on because of your involvement. We are especially grateful to CMC Vellore for supporting the hospital through financial and administrative input and through the many specialists who visit regularly.

