

## K.M.F. Newsletter (Jan – Mar 2023)

*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.

The new year brings a sense of hope and expectation and the first newsletter of KMF comes with the same sentiment. There is also a sense of profound thankfulness as we look back and testify to how God has been faithful in providing and protecting us. The work in the hospital continues to grow and we are witness to new ventures and consolidation and growth of ongoing activities. The community and home-based care programme is slowly picking pace and we are dreaming and planning for a comprehensive rehabilitation and palliative center. Staff training and improvement in quality and standards is something we have been focusing on the last year and we hope to continue this. Several consultants in CMC and elsewhere have continued to support us with their expertise and time, coming for consultations, training and guiding us here and for this we are very grateful. Though KMF is self-sufficient for its operations, we are reliant on donors for upgrading our equipment and all of us are very thankful to all who contributed in many ways towards the growth of the hospital.

*See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. Rev 3:8*

Dr. Tony Abraham Thomas  
Medical Superintendent, KMF Hospital

### *What's happening in KMF ?*

#### **Eye and ENT camps (DBCS)**

A team from KMF consisting of an ophthalmologist, optometrists, nurses and volunteers conducts free eye and ENT camps twice a month in the villages in Kotagiri. During the period from July 2022 to March 2023, camps were held in the villages of Solumattam, Kookalthurai, Keradamattam, Gandhipuram, Havukkal, Kaithala, S.Kaikatty, Kannerimukku, Kattabettu, Kakasholai, Kumaran colony, Fern Hill Ooty, Kookalthurai and Gundada. Around 1300 persons with cataract are screened and 127 free cataract surgeries were done in KMF under the DBCS (District Blindness Control Society) scheme. Those with refractive error are provided glasses in the camp. The government TB control staff also attend these camps and provide diagnostic tests like x-ray and guide patients in TB treatment. Audiology and ENT screening is done to pick up hearing defects and treat common ear problems and now the services of our dentist provide dental consultations too in these camps.



### ***Pediatric Cardiology screening camp***

KMF conducted a free Pediatric cardiology screening camp along with the Pediatric Cardiology Department of CMC Vellore on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Eighty children with heart-related problems were screened on that day using ECHO and other tests along with clinical examination by Dr. Gayatri from CMC Vellore. Four children were identified for further evaluation and two children with a hole in the heart were identified for treatment in CMC Vellore. These children were identified and mobilized from the community by the RBSK team of the government who helped in following up and organizing this camp. We are thankful to Dr. Oommen George and Dr. Jesu Krupa from Department of Cardiology, CMC Vellore and the GE company in Coimbatore who organized the ECHO machine. Lunch was provided for the children and parents thanks to Mr. Shanmuganathan of Nam Sandhai Farm in Kotagiri who sponsored this.



### ***Rheumatology consultation and CME***

The Rheumatology department of CMC Vellore led by Dr. John Mathew has sending consultants every month to KMF from March 2022 (second Saturday of each month). They see local as well as follow-up patients from Erode and Coimbatore. Dr. Prabhu, accompanied by Dr. Shyam Shah conducted a consultation followed by a CME programme on common rheumatological conditions for general practitioners in the Nilgiris on 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2023. The CME was highly appreciated by the GPs because it addressed issues faced by them in their daily practice.



### ***Tribal mission fest - Jason***



A programme to evaluate and address the needs of tribal communities was held by the CSI church Coimbatore diocese on 20<sup>th</sup> February in Kunjapanai. Dr. Jason

and Dr. Miriam attended this program to evaluate the health needs of the people belonging to tribal communities and train the delegates.

### ***Traffic police eye camp***





The traffic policemen of Kotagiri organized a free eye camp for taxi and auto drivers of Kotagiri on 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2023. During this camp, free eye check-ups including refraction and consultations were conducted by the staff and ophthalmologist of KMF. This is a highly appreciable effort by the police department.

### **Free hearing and ENT camp**



A free ENT and Audiology camp was held on March 3<sup>rd</sup> which was celebrated as World Hearing Day. Hearing testing (audiometry) and ENT consultations were held for those with hearing problems and those requiring hearing aids were identified for further evaluation.

### **Eye and ENT school screening camps**



In an attempt to pick up hearing and visual problems early, screening camps have been held in 12 schools and colleges over the last one year. Audiometry and optometric tests are done by KMF staff during these programmes and children identified with problems are guided on further evaluation and treatment.

### **Medical students visit**

Seven medical students from Tirunelveli Medical College visited KMF for two days (15,16<sup>th</sup>



Feb) during their holidays along with Mr. Sunil from Coimbatore. These young souls spent their time understanding the activities of a peripheral mission hospital, interacted with staff and went on walks in the countryside during this visit.



### **Community Health and Palliative care**

The community health work started with a small team of two who had received six months of in-person home care training from CMC Vellore and weekly online training for over 3 months from the palliative care dept of CMC. We have also received online certificate training from CMAI, Joni & Friends and Alzheimers and Related Disorders Society of India.



With the improvement in hospital services over the years, the hospital observed a high incidence of patients with stroke and geriatric patients with various diseases. A subset of families who found it challenging to care for these patients at home and high risk patients were enrolled into the **Home based Rehabilitation and Palliative Care Program**. Over the



year we enrolled over 70 families in the program, amazingly over a third were either referred to us by people in the community or were found in the community during camps. We network with a range of governmental organizations including the education department, differently-abled welfare office, women and child welfare, ICDS and various departments under the Ministry of Health.

Palliative care, disability rehabilitation and chronic illness are major unmet needs in the Nilgiris. Our dream and plan is towards building a comprehensive rehabilitation and palliative care center in KMF with physiotherapy, occupational therapy, audiology and medical therapy which will fulfil this need.

### **Keystone health workers training**

KMF doctors and paramedical workers conducted a training programme over 2 days on March



13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> for health workers of Keystone, an NGO that looks after health, economic and cultural development of tribal communities in the Nilgiris. The topics covered included common medical, orthopedic conditions, stroke, physiotherapy and rehabilitation.

### **Staff sports and games**

It was fun and games, literally, for five days from Feb 21<sup>st</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, when staff and staff children of KMF got together for the staff sports and games programme. This was the first such programme and the response and participation was overwhelming and enthusiastic. It



was a wonderful time for staff to get together, have fun and compete in various games in an informal

setting, providing opportunities to bond and form friendships.



### **Staff training**

- Dr. Kamalakar (Orthopedics) completed a 7-month PG Certificate course “Primary care in Musculoskeletal medicine” (Rheumatology course) conducted by BMJ in February.
- Lab technicians Shyamala, Latha, Renny and Moorthy underwent Blood bank training courses in PSG Medical College, Coimbatore in the month of March.

### **Training conducted**

- Introduction to Palliative care for MCC students – January 2023
- Occupational Therapy – Early intervention training for doctors by Ms. Teresa – January 2023
- Class for medical students, Ooty Govt. Medical College - Dr. Tony Abraham (Clinical neuroanatomy, Nov 2022) and Dr. Jason Thomas (Clinical approach to patients, Jan 2023).

## *Specialty Consultations*

### **Vascular surgery consultation (March 18<sup>th</sup> 2023 )**



A team of vascular surgeons, anesthetists and technicians visited KMF for a consultation in November 2021 and then on March 18th 2023 led by Dr. Deepak John from Dept. of Vascular surgery and Dr. Ruth Mannam from Dept. of Anesthesia, CMC Vellore. Besides

consultations, Doppler scans and Endovascular laser surgeries were performed for those with varicose veins.

### **Free cancer consultation**

A free cancer consultation and cervical cancer screening was held on 10<sup>th</sup> February. Dr. Patricia from the Radiation Oncology department of CMC Vellore provided her services which included





consultations for patients with cancer on chemotherapy, palliative care and radiation therapy. Dr. Beulah from KMF facilitated the cervical cancer screening.

### ***Pulmonology (Monthly)***

The Department of Pulmonary Medicine of CMC Vellore conducts a Pulmonary and Asthma consultation once a month. The team consists of a consultant and pulmonary technicians who provide consultations, pulmonary function tests and treatment for patients suffering from respiratory illnesses of various kinds.

### ***ENT and audiometry***

Dr. Arun Govind from Dept. of ENT, CMC Vellore conducted an ENT consultation on March 17<sup>th</sup>.

### ***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.

### ***General surgery***

Dr. Sampath Karl from the Dept. of Pediatric Surgery, CMC Vellore has been providing general surgical consultations regularly. Apart from surgeries, he also helps with gastroscopy.

## Human interest stories - The impact of KMF



### **New lease of life**

Fifteen-year-old Sumathi\* was brought to the hospital by a social worker because she was unable to speak, had swelling of her face and arms and was feeling tired and lethargic. Due to her illness, she had stopped going to school for more than a month. Unable to find medical help and because she lived in a remote tribal hamlet, her family did not know what to do and she was just sitting at home and had not gone to school for more than a month. The family agreed to come to KMF because a relative in the village had been treated here earlier. She was found to have severe megaloblastic anemia and treatment was started. Within three days, there was dramatic improvement and by the end of the week, Sumathi had a bright smile on her face and was walking everywhere. It was like she had been given a new lease of life. Though her diagnosis was relatively simple, she had not sought medical care because she came from a remote area and a lack of knowledge.



### **Hearing again, moving again**

Unable to hear and therefore unable to be involved in daily conversations was a huge impediment to Mr. Karthik\*. And the fact that he was immobilized due to a major stroke made life very difficult and gradually pushed him into depression. The home based care team identified these issues during their visits and after consultations, a hearing aid was provided which opened up his world and enabled him to be an active part of his family and friends again. A wheelchair also added mobility. Simple measures, but they made a tremendous difference in his outlook and it was a joy to see him get out of his despondency gradually. The team continues to keep in touch with him. We are thankful to all who contributed towards this.

(\*all names have been changed)

## How can you be involved in KMF's revival?

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

1. **Pray** – Please pray and support the work in KMF, for the staff and
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 Christ 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 to be a witness to God's glory.
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 endeavour 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.

### 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. **General surgeon needed** – On short-term or long term or visiting basis.
2. **Charity fund** – Any amount to this fund will be used to subsidise treatment costs to those who require treatment but cannot afford the cost.
3. **Eye and ENT camp support** – **KMF conducts free eye and ENT camps every month.** Rs. 25,000 will support one eye/ENT camp. Rs. 1 Lakh will support the cost of surgery for 10 patients who undergo free cataract surgery during each eye camp.

### KMF Hospital contact details

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