

R.M.F. Newsletter

Volume 4(3)
Jul - Dec 2022



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K.M.F. Newsletter (Jul – Dec 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 year comes to a close, the KMF family looks back with gratitude at the faithfulness of our Heavenly Father who has sustained us. There is a sense of joy as the community got together to serve the people of the Nilgiris through clinical work, community outreach programmes and as new services like ENT and palliative care were started. The multilingual Christmas carol programme and the Christmas dinner brought staff and families of the hospital together to serve and celebrate. The clinical work has shown a slow but steady growth and the hospital has been getting busier. Outreach into the community is being built up with home based care, palliative and rehabilitation care. It is our hope that we will soon have a center that will provide training and comprehensive care for rehabilitation, palliative and geriatric care.

The sense of joy was mixed with sorrow as we grieved over the illness and ultimate passing of Dr. Lydia Koshy who went through a very difficult period of debilitating illness. Her services to KMF will be remembered for a long time and her passing leaves a sorrowing community that is also grateful for her unmatched service during her time here.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28

Dr. Tony Abraham Thomas
Medical Superintendent, KMF Hospital

What's happening in KMF ?

Mortuary Inauguration



A refrigerated mortuary facility was inaugurated on 29th of November in KMF Hospital by the honourable collector of the Nilgiris Thiru. S.P. Amrith. This is the first such facility in the Nilgiris and is the fulfilment

of a long felt need by the local community for a facility where the body of a loved one may be preserved until the final rites are completed. The facility was made possible thanks to donations from various individuals and we are thankful to Ms. Radhika Shastry who spearheaded the donation drive and to Mr. Charles who oversaw

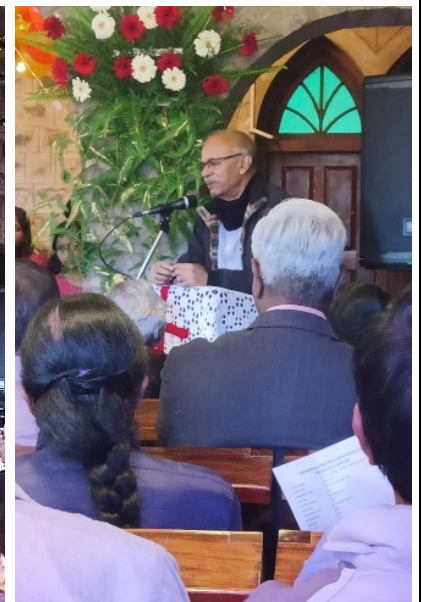
the construction of the room and installation of the machine. The facility named 'Haven of Rest' will be open to patients of the hospital and to the general community in the Nilgiris.

Free Eye and ENT camps (DBCS)



A team from KMF consisting of an ophthalmologist, optometrists, nurses and volunteers has been conducting free eye camps twice a month in the villages in Kotagiri since July 2022. Persons with cataract are screened and undergo free cataract surgeries in KMF under the DBCS (District Blindness Control Society) scheme. Between 80-125 villagers make use of the camps each time and 75 free surgeries have been done so far. Those with refractive error are provided glasses in the camp. ENT hearing screening was incorporated from September and those with hearing loss are guided for hearing aid evaluation.

Multilingual Christmas Carol service



The angelic choir announced the birth of Christ Jesus with singing and the staff of KMF did the same with a Multilingual Christmas Carol service on the 15th of December. Why multilingual? Because KMF has staff from different parts of India speaking a multitude of languages and it was only fitting that we celebrated with songs in Tamil, Badaga, English, Malayalam, Telugu and Hindi. Dr. Susheel Tharien from Christian Fellowship Hospital, Oddanchatram kindly consented to give the message on the day. The two months of preparation for this program was also an important period of bonding and fellowship between staff from various departments.

ENT and audiology service



Full time ENT service started in September with the arrival of Dr. Akhila Thomas (ENT surgeon) and Ms. Joanna (Audiologist) who joined us from CMC Vellore. Hearing testing, hearing aid, ENT outpatient and inpatient services, nasal and laryngeal endoscopy, speech therapy are some of services available. Community ENT service was also started with hearing screening camps being conducted twice a month in villages. They have been providing a much needed service that has been sorely lacking in Kotagiri and the surrounding regions and we are thankful to CMC Vellore for deputing both of them. KMF is indebted to Dr. Regi Thomas of CMC Vellore who has facilitated and guided the formation of this service.

World Hospice and Palliative care day



World Hospice and Palliative care day was celebrated on 14th October by Felicitating over 40 Rehabilitation and Palliative care frontline workers from various government offices, hospitals, NGOs and community volunteers in Kotagiri. The Deputy Director of Health Services, Dr P Balusamy, was represented by Dr Rajesh, Kotagiri Block Medical

Officer. He gave a detailed account of the palliative care team consisting of a physiotherapist, nurse and driver working along with the ASHAs and the different ways people with palliative and rehabilitative needs are being served through the government services and institutions. The District Disability Rehabilitation Officer, Mrs. Malarvizhi, was represented by Mr. Shanmugam, who explained the benefits available for people with disability through their office including pensions for the beneficiaries. The District Chairman, Mr. Ponthos graced the occasion and encouraged the audience with the work of the government. Guests from various sectors including the District Special Education, District TB program, Nilgiri Adivasi Welfare Association, Keystone, Jyothi Seva Society, St. Francis Old Age Home, CARE Trust, Jeevandram Trust, Desilva Trust, Devamatha School of Nursing, MCC Community College, Holy Family Mission Hospital among several independent and group community volunteers explained the kind of work they do and expressed their willingness to contribute their strengths by symbolically tying a signed paper leaf to the symbolic tree of collaboration.

Disability evaluation camp



A Disability camp was held by the District Differently-abled Welfare Office at KMF on 15th November. An Orthopedic surgeon, Physician, Psychiatrist, Ophthalmologists, ENT and audiologist from the Ooty Government Hospital reviewed over 70 cases and issued new disability certificates for 36 people, a few others got a renewed certificates and made applications for assistive

devices. Twenty of those who got new disability certificates were from the tribal community and this was made possible because of collaboration with various organizations like Keystone, NAWA, Shanthi Neethi kendra who helped identify patients, bring them and helped with running the camp. The government palliative care nurse, sister Ruby Teresa

had a big role to play in planning and organizing the event.

World Disability Day program



World Disability Day was commemorated by a sensitization program conducted by a small team of staff on 3rd December where over 30 staff participated.



Activities like learning the alphabets in Indian Sign Language and disability simulation activity over tea and snacks helped us as a team

to identify with people with disability and their caregivers. We had engaging small group discussions on a few bible passages and shared our discoveries. From Exodus 4:10 - 17 we learnt the God takes

responsibility for those with disability and that people with disability have roles to play. Mark 10:46-52 we leaned into our God who is sovereign and compassionate and in John 9 we recognised how easy it is to hold the worldview that disability is a result of sin. We also discovered how He longed to heal not only the physical body but to open our spiritual eyes and that we are all made in His image. The short one-hour session ended with making a hand paint heart mural as a fun team building activity.

KMF in the news

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Mortuary inaugurated at KMF Hospital in Kotagiri.

November 29, 2022 06:29 pm | Updated 06:29 pm IST - UDHAGAMANDALAM

THE HINDU BUREAU

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The KMF Hospital, managed by CMC Vellore, allotted space for the facility. **MORTUARY IN KOTAGIRI** BY COLLECTOR S.K. AMRITH ON Tuesday. At the event, Mr. Amrith said this was a first in the Nilgiris district, fulfilling a long-felt need in the community. Such initiatives were enhancing the medical infrastructure in the district and a robust public-private partnership model was working at its best, he added.

KMF Staff Activities!

Farewell to Dr. Lydia John

Dr. Lydia John who joined us in 2019 as a physician left for her eternal abode on 28 December 2022. Her passing has left a huge hole in the hearts of the entire KMF community of staff who had been upholding the family in prayer daily during her prolonged period of illness. During her time in KMF, she touched the lives of not only the patients she ministered to but to the staff and families in the hospital through her commitment to excellence in work, hospitality and most importantly her ever-ready smile. Even during her illness that robbed her of the ability to walk, she continued to attend OPD and do ward rounds until it was simply impossible to do so. Born in Kotagiri, our heavenly Father saw it fit that she should leave from Kotagiri. The entire KMF family will miss her dearly. Please uphold Dr. Koshy George, her husband and their two sons, Joel (14) and Andrew (8), and extended family in your prayers.

The following is an excerpt from an obituary from CMC Vellore.

Born 09/12/1970 at Kotagiri, Dr. Lydia shared her birthday with at least one other strong, intelligent, beautiful, brave, Godly, compassionate, and overall exemplary woman we all know - Dr. Ida Sophia Scudder. However, the demure, quietly confident woman with



the sweetest smile and sparkles in her eyes that remained till she closed them forever this morning will remain the Dr. Lydia we all know and love.

Lydia's strength was based on the strong foundations of her close relationship with God and His word.

Dr. Lydia stood for and upheld justice and excellence, speaking up for what was right and defending her right to do so. The girl who came to Vellore in 1988 as the epitome of simplicity and innocence had attributes that belied a strength that comes from a steadfast faith in God and a commitment to serving Him through medicine. During their post-graduate training period, Dr. Lydia John had committed to marry Dr. Koshy George, who found a friend in his quiet, spiritual, loyal, but fiercely independent MBBS classmate and foster sister, leading to their marriage in 1999.

Her (their) legacy of being exemplary Christian students, physicians, teachers, and leaders spans from the North to South and Western to Eastern-most corners of the Nation. Apart from stints in CMC Vellore for post-graduate training, they have faithfully served in the mission hospitals of EHA and, more recently, Kotagiri Medical Fellowship.

Drs. Koshy and Lydia have coached and mentored many young doctors and nurses everywhere they worked. The "open house" at their home each week, both in Herbertpur and Tezpur, offered a warm dinner and an empathetic listening ear. People came to Dr. Koshy and Dr. Lydia, trusting them with their deepest worries and concerns, confident of a welcoming heart and good cheer from Dr. Koshy. Still, many have said they came knowing that talking things through with Dr. Lydia would help them make the right decisions.

Lydia's honesty and sense of fairness set benchmarks for quality in clinical care for colleagues in her clinical team and across other institutions and the EHA organisation. Dr. Lydia is an excellent physician who has always prioritized her patients, setting an example emulated by her clinical team of doctors and nurses to strive for excellence in patient care. She always invested substantive time with her patient beyond the clinical need to be a doctor who prays with her patients.

Dr. Lydia, who trained in Internal medicine (CMC, Vellore), recognized the high burden of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis in the community served by Herbertpur Christian Hospital and formalized treatment plans for tuberculosis. This work was used to develop hospital, district, and regional guidelines for TB management. In Tezpur, she designed home-based care for stroke patients and the mobile stroke unit (second in the country) through her resolve to deliver affordable, state-of-the-art place-based medical care in very low-resource settings. She worked to secure collaborative partnerships with various service providers and funders to operationalize the unit, which has been on the road to saving lives and spreading hope since February 2020. She also developed antibiotic protocols to address the significant infectious disease pathology patients attending the hospital.

Dr. Lydia led the family and community in spiritual growth and development, establishing the social support systems that enabled the organization to deliver its healthcare mandate. A resolute believer in human



rights and women's empowerment, she lent her voice to committees and platforms that enforce measures to prevent and address sexual harassment and realize women's rights in the workplace. In recognition of their service, Drs. Lydia and Koshy were awarded the Christian Medical College motto award in 2015.

Serving with a giving spirit, despite the many health struggles they encountered for themselves, and their children, Drs. Lydia and Koshy put others, especially the patients under their care, ahead of themselves. This was again demonstrated when she continued to work at KMF through the trying times of the COVID Pandemic while herself manifesting symptomatology that had the neurologists flummoxed. Even after receiving the diagnosis of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), she continued to see patients for as long as she was physically able to. Despite limitations in mobility and communication functions, she resolutely continued her ministry as a physician through remote consultation and being available for clinical advice to help with patient care.

Dr. Lydia touched the lives of everyone she met, and through them, the ripples have spread far and wide, leaving a legacy of memorable faith, steadfastness, and good grace. She leaves behind a grieving family, extended family, and community as she reached the end of her journey on earth this morning in Kotagiri, where it began 52 years ago.

Staff training - ENT theater equipment training



Mrs. Mythili Martin from CMC Vellore visited KMF for two days on October 20th and 21st 2022 to train the theatre staff on taking

care of expensive ENT instruments, endoscopes, microscopes and other equipment.

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.

KMF sports a new look



Some buildings of KMF hospital sport a new look with a fresh coat of paint!

Academic sessions

Various consultants from different specialties in CMC Vellore, Dr. Philip Finny, Endocrinologist from



Believers Hospital and others have been involved in academic classes for the doctors during their visits.

Specialty Consultations

Vascular surgery and general surgery consultation (July 30th, Sep 29th)



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 July 30th and September 29th led by Dr. Prabhu Premkumar. Besides consultations, Doppler scans and Endovascular laser surgeries were performed for those with varicose veins.

Dr. Sukria Nayak from the department of Surgery in Vellore was also present and helped supervise general surgeries during this time.

Plastic surgery (July 30th, Sep 29th)

Dr. Ashish Gupta, professor and head of Department of Plastic Surgery in CMC Vellore saw patients, took

academic classes for the staff and helped Dr. Kamalakar with some surgical procedures when he visited us along with the Vascular surgery team.

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 (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. He has been instrumental in raising funds for ENT equipment and setting up the ENT service in KMF.

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

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



Paralysed but empowered

Mr. Kumar had been lying at home following a devastating accident which left him quadriplegic, which meant he could not move his arms or legs and had no sensation below his neck. For want of care, he had developed urinary problems and a large bed sore which had not healed for more than 2 months. He was admitted as part of the rehabilitation and palliative care programme and was seen by a urologist and received care for his bed sore by the hospital team. Nutritional supplementation was provided to improve his protein intake. The palliative team worked out a way in which, using a prop-up stand, he could read and watch videos. His family was also educated in the different aspects of his care. The palliative team continues to visit him at home regularly to follow up on his care. His hospital stay and treatment was provided completely free of cost.



Bones and joints healed

Hobbled by an injury to her leg, Ms. Kamalam struggled to walk and wondered if her life would be the same. She was evaluated by the Orthopedic team and x-rays showed fracture of the femur. She underwent surgery with a metal implant followed by a period of rehabilitation. Today, she is able to walk and is independent for daily activities in her village.

Ms. Radha lived with a tumour in her foot for more than 2 years which she did not take care of because of financial constraints. She was



evaluated and underwent surgery for the condition and today she is free from the disease. Both these surgeries were done at a very low cost with concessions given, which was possible thanks to the kind donors to the charity fund of KMF.
(*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. **Equipment needed** – Effluent treatment plant (Approx. Rs. 12 Lakh), Solar electricity (Approx. Rs. 8 lakh), Ophthalmology Operating table (Rs. 2 lakh)
3. **General surgeon needed** – On short-term or long term or visiting basis.
4. **Charity fund** – Any amount to this fund will be used to subsidise treatment costs to those who require treatment but cannot afford the cost.

KMF Hospital contact details

Telephone - Office: (+91)4266-273777 / 272217 (Office hours only)

Email: kmfoffice@kmf-kotagiri.org , ms@kmf-kotagiri.org

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 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 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.

