

K.M.F. Newsletter

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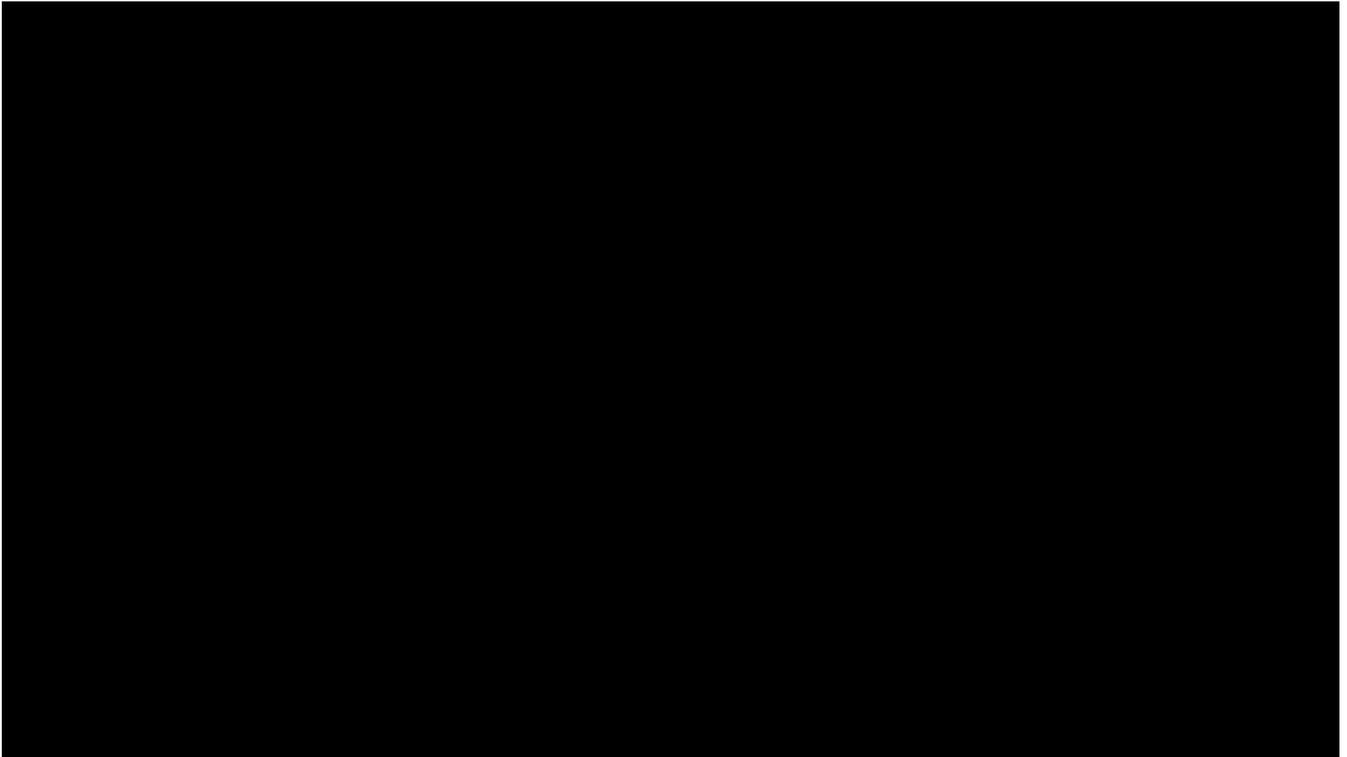


Photo - Christmas lunch

(Staff of KMF get together for a meal outside Oxfam building, KMF campus)

What's inside?

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K.M.F. Newsletter

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.

It has been an eventful and 'interesting' year, not only for us in Kotagiri but throughout the world. Of all the events, the viral pandemic has had the greatest impact on our lives and for better or worse, it will be an event that will not be easily forgotten. Through this year, KMF too has been affected by the effects of the virus. Financially and in terms of patients using the hospital facility, we have gone through a difficult time. Administratively there were numerous challenges both internally and with respect to external issues. We prepared ourselves to handle the pandemic, were involved in treating COVID cases and some of some of our staff were affected by the illness too. However, through it all, our witness is that God has been faithful to support and provide for us. We were able to go through this without any salary cuts to the staff, the staff who were affected recovered without any significant damage and the hospital has been slowly recovering back to its normal activities over the last two months. We are hoping that we will be able to restore the regular 'expert consultations' from CMC Vellore and other places once travel restrictions are eased.

KMF is very grateful to all those who supported us – financially, through prayer and in many other ways. Those who 'hold the ropes' are vital to the functioning of this ministry and the help extended by well-wishers is a great encouragement to all of us working in KMF. As we look forward to the new year, we are also making plans to start a community outreach programme that will provide healthcare to neglected tribal populations in Kotagiri, a blood storage center to ensure availability of blood in emergencies and a CT Scan machine. Please do keep these in prayer and hope this newsletter will be an encouragement to you as well.

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no heart has imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him." 1Cor 2:9

Dr. Tony Abraham Thomas
Medical Superintendent, KMF Hospital

Staff in the limelight

(Ms. Mary)



Quiet and efficient, moving about slowly, Ms. Mary can easily be overlooked in the daily activities of KMF, but she has been a faithful member of the community for the last 27 years helping out in different capacities over the years. Mary completed ANM training in Government Lawley Hospital, Coonoor and did her internship in Government Hospital, Egmore, Madras (Chennai). While in Chennai, out of her own interest, she trained herself to take x-rays and learnt the basics of being a lab technician. Following this, she returned to the Nilgiris and worked in various centers before joining KMF Hospital in 1993. Since then, she has been a constant but quiet presence, always ready to help out with a smile. Over the years,

her body may have suffered the ravages of time, but her willingness to help out and contribute to the hospital in any capacity remains undimmed. Today, she helps in supervising the laundry and provides a helping hand to the x-ray technician. Before we had a full-time radiographer, it was sister Mary who the doctors turned to for taking an x-ray, and she would do it all - from positioning the patient, x-ray exposure to development of the final film. Though she walks slowly and with a limp, a consequence of a fracture in her student days, Ms. Mary stands tall in the list of faithful members of KMF, those who have contributed to the work of the Kingdom of God quietly and faithfully.

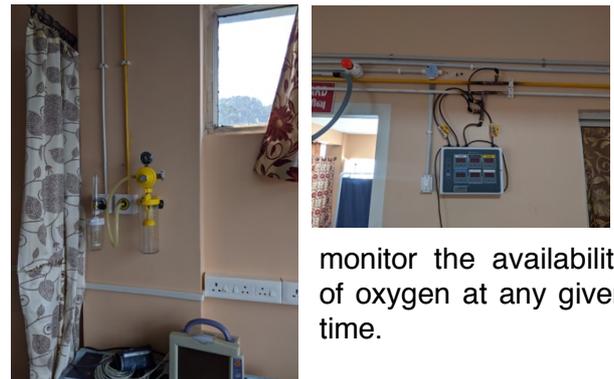
What's happening in KMF ?

Medical gases pipeline installation

One of the urgent needs of the hospital was delivery of oxygen and medical gases through a piped system.

A piped medical gas system (oxygen and vacuum) was installed in the month of October 2020 and dedicated to the glory of God on 2nd November 2020. This includes a central manifold, vacuum plant, pipelines and alarm system.

The Delivery of oxygen is vital in the management of sick patients, especially those who are in the ICU, wards and those undergoing surgery in the operation theatre. In the current COVID pandemic situation, the need for oxygen and ventilator support became particularly important and adequate oxygen availability through a centralized piped system ensures that this supply is available at the bedside of the patient. Piped oxygen also helps us plan for using a ventilator for sick patients since high volume oxygen is necessary for this. Before this, we were dependent on oxygen cylinders to be transported to the bedside. This was cumbersome, inefficient and it was difficult to



monitor the availability of oxygen at any given time.

We were able to purchase and install this, thanks to generous donations from Mr. Mukund Rajan and Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies. KMF is very grateful to them for supporting this project and improving the standard of patient care in the Nilgiris.

COVID-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic reached its peak in the Nilgiris in the months of July, August and September and KMF hospital was involved in the care of patients affected by this illness. One floor of the hospital building was dedicated as an isolation ward for admission and treatment of Covid and Covid suspects.

Though procurement of PPE was difficult in the initial days of the pandemic, we are now able to source them without difficulty. With the help of donations by various organizations and individuals, we have been able to purchase protective equipment in the form of masks, gloves, disinfectants etc.

When the doctors suspect a person to have the illness, the person is referred to the Kotagiri GH for testing. We are not authorized to take samples or test for COVID. The government hospitals in the Nilgiris have been converted



into COVID centers and positive cases are sent to these centers or to Coimbatore as per the latest guidelines. An inspection of the hospital was conducted by government officials and at their request, the hospital has provided space to quarantine people when they enter the Nilgiris from other districts, until their test results are ready.

In this scenario, the hospital has taken some steps to go through the pandemic period, as enlisted below.

1. Patients are triaged at the entrance with temperature readings.
2. There is a separate fever clinic where patients with fever are seen which is away from the main OPD and IP areas.
3. Restrictions on number of visitors and social distancing in the hospital.
4. Modified sanitation regimen which includes hypochlorite solution based cleaning of surfaces, mandatory hand sanitization etc.
5. The hospital has been divided into a fever and non-fever zone, with one floor dedicated for admission of Covid cases only. Pathways to ensure that patients with fever do not mingle with others were put in place.

The staff are given periodic presentations to educate about the illness and preventive measures and continuing informal teaching sessions are carried out on a daily basis. Cloth masks were made locally to supplement the regular masks for all staff and 'home-made' sterilizing solution/hand-rub was prepared by the staff to ensure that all staff and patients are adequately supplied.

COVID training for staff -

1. "COVID-19 preparedness critical care course" – Six doctors and two nurses completed this course run by the Distance Education Department of CMC Vellore.
2. Regular training of staff – on various aspects of COVID related issues such as hospital triage, cleaning protocols, personal protection, use of PPEs etc.

Malnutrition survey along with ICDS

The ICDS, integrated child development scheme is a government programme in India

which targets overall well-being of under-five children. The scheme aims to identify and correct malnutrition in under five children. Dr. Sunitha and Dr. Koshy volunteered to assess the severely malnourished children in the block and make health plans for them. They visited almost 12 such children at their homes and interacted with the families. Some of the children are followed up in KMF OPD.



Disability training

The ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme) invited Dr. Sunitha to train the Anganwadi workers of Kotagiri block on the topic of Disability. The aim of the training was to identify different kinds of disabilities in children – physical, mental, intellectual etc. and to refer appropriately. Forty workers were part of this and they were involved in enthusiastic interaction during the session, clarifying doubts and asking questions. Similar such trainings are being planned by the ICDS for Coonoor and Ooty block.



Care Trust Adolescent camp

Care trust in Kotagiri works towards the well-being



and empowerment of adolescent girls in the area. Many of them work in small scale

industries like cotton processing. They requested KMF to assess and treat them for occupational hazards and other diseases. Dr. Sunitha did this on behalf of KMF.

August 30th Founder's Day

We celebrate Founder's day every year in memory of Dr. Pauline Jeffrey and other pioneers who started the work in KMF. This year, in view of the pandemic, Founder's day was celebrated with a chapel service attended by staff. This was a time to look back at those who contributed to the hospital despite setbacks and personal costs and to thank God for the giants on whose shoulders we stand today.

Christmas lunch



In keeping with the restrictions due to the pandemic, KMF decided to restrict the annual Christmas

programme to a community lunch which was held on Dec 11th. The programme started off with a short chapel service led by Mr. Jebaraj and a short message delivered by Pastor Verghese. Following this, the staff got together for lunch behind the Oxfam building. It was a good time to get together as a community and enjoy a meal over conversations.

Farewell to Mrs. Eswari

Mrs. Eswari George joined KMF in 2019 and provided her services as an MSc. Staff nurse. She was involved in the in-service training of the nurses and also supervised the functioning of the sweepers and peons during her one year in KMF. During this period, her quiet but firm way of interacting with those she worked with made an deep impact on them going beyond the confines of work boundaries and into their lives. George was an integral part of the KMF community and was active in leading Bible studies and speaking in morning devotions in chapel. As a family, they have contributed greatly to the work of KMF and we will dearly

miss this family. We wish them all the best as they plan to continue the work of the Lord in Lamtaput, Orissa.

Mr. Alphy retires

After 32 years of faithful service, Mr. Alphy who served in the capacity of driver retired in the month of October 2020. A service was held to thank him for his service to the hospital. He will be continuing as a post-retired staff.



Portable x-ray machine

A portable x-ray machine was purchased in December 2020. This helps in performing x-rays at the bedside of the patient. This is particularly useful when doctors need urgent x-rays for

patients who are very sick and cannot be shifted to the x-ray unit on the ground floor. We were able to purchase this thanks to a kind donation by Mr. Jobby Jacob and the Oommen family.

Blood donation camp

A blood donation camp was held on December 12th, 2020 in KMF along with Rotary of Kotagiri



and the St. Mary's Youth club of Diocese of Ootacamund. The programme started with a short function and felicitation followed by the process of donation of blood from volunteers by

the Blood Bank of Coonoor Lawley Government Hospital.

Renovation work on the old laboratory building

The original laboratory building of KMF lies behind the current structure and was not being used. Renovation work is going on so that the building (two floors) can be used as an extension of the outpatient department and for other purposes.

Donation by Justice and Hope



We are thankful to 'Justice and Hope' ministry in Chennai for their generous donation of a chair in the laboratory and protective equipment in the month of December 2020.

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Congratulations to Ms. Teena, daughter of Mr. Moses, hospital peon who was selected for BSc MLT in CMC Vellore. We wish her all the best in her studies and her future.

Underground copper cable

As part of maintenance and upgrading of electrical services, an underground cable was laid in the month of November 2020. This will ensure that uniform electrical supply is available to the hospital and equipment in the hospital.

Specialty consultations

While KMF provides services covering most basic specialties in medicine and surgery, there is a need for specialty services for certain illnesses. Visiting consultants from CMC Vellore, alumni from Vellore and others fill this gap by generously providing their services on a voluntary basis. KMF is indebted to them and their services are greatly appreciated by the locals who are able to consult reliable consultants right in their town rather than travelling to Coimbatore for every illness.

In the scenario of travel restrictions and lockdowns, the specialty consultations from outside the Nilgiris was restricted in the last nine months.

Plans for the immediate future

1. **Community outreach** – KMF has a history of reaching out to the tribal population of Kotagiri through its Kotagiri tribal development project. We are working on revival of this outreach so that medical services are available and the community in the region of Kothimukku and Aracode benefit from preventive and curative medical care.
2. **Blood storage center** – 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 center. This will involve renovating building space for the center and purchasing equipment and obtaining licences from the regulating authorities.
3. **CT Scan** – We are in great need of a CT Scan machine to diagnose and treat emergencies like stroke, orthopedic and surgical illnesses. With a neurosurgeon and general surgeon on board, the need for a CT scan machine is increasing. The nearest reliable CT facility in an emergency is about 26 kilometers away, which translates to 2 – 3 hours of travel in the hills in order to get a diagnosis. This is particularly a problem when patients with stroke and other emergencies where a quick diagnosis is of the essence.

PHOTOGRAPHS

A few photographs of the life and work in KMF.



Above and left: Staff Christmas

Above:
Orthopedic
surgery in
progress.

Right: Blood
donation camp

Left and below:
Photographs of
KMF taken by
staff Michael and
Sweety.
Malnutrition
survey with ICDS.



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.
2. **Protection and wisdom** – During this pandemic period, the hospital functions under constraints. 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** - We will need equipment to upgrade the hospital. Here are some of our needs.

Charity fund for poor patients – Any amount.

Ultrasound machine – 15-20 lakh

CT scan machine – Approximate cost – 1.6 crore

We are hiring!! - Junior doctor needed

1. **Post MBBS, doctors for shift duty. This is an excellent opportunity to work and study, and more importantly be mentored by experienced doctors.**
2. **Senior nurse needed – to oversee and mentor the nursing staff.**

Please contact us at kmfhospital1941@gmail.com with your resume.

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.