

# Cairdeas Newsletter

**Cairdeas International Palliative Care Trust**



Much has taken place since our last Newsletter. The degree course in Kampala is now under way, and we are looking to develop the work further through research focused on providing palliative care in the most appropriate way in an African setting; and our work in India has moved into the hugely populous state of Uttar Pradesh. And we welcome a new member to our board of trustees.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter; and, of course, we would be delighted to hear your comments.

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## **Uganda**

### **Degree for Africa - goes live!**

**Yes - it's taken many months of hard work by Mhoira and the education team at Hospice Africa Uganda, led by Flavia Bukundana, along with colleagues in Makerere University - but we're delighted to report that the B.Sc. in Palliative Care got under way in February.**

There are 21 students, coming from Kenya, Namibia, Malawi, Swaziland and Tanzania as well as Uganda. So they speak different languages and come from different cultures; and they include government workers, mission hospital staff, mothers and poets. A really varied group but, as Mhoira says, "they all have such a commitment to learn and to make a difference for the many, many who are in need in their own countries."

After completing an intensive four weeks of face-to-face teaching they have now gone back to their own countries to work at a distance – completing assignments and exams and then clinical placements.

Those leaving after Year 1 with a pass will be awarded a Diploma; others will stay on into Years 2 and 3 to complete their B.Sc. And there are a further 13 students, who already hold a relevant Diploma, who will go straight into Year 2 in August.

Across Africa there is growing interest in developing comprehensive cancer control programmes and integrating palliative care. Governments are becoming involved as they realise that non-communicable diseases such as cancer will become major threats to health in the African region over the next few decades.

The students being trained at Makerere and Mulago, and all those whom they in turn will teach and train, will help to make a real difference. This new degree is indeed 'Building for the future' - training many future leaders for palliative care in Africa.



*Some of the students with staff from the Palliative Care Unit*

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## Collaborating on research

You may recall from our previous Newsletter that **Scott Murray, who is Professor of Primary Palliative Care at Edinburgh University, visited Uganda last year at the launch of the Palliative Care Research Network at Makerere University. He visited again in April this year to discuss possible collaborative research between these and Yale University, and kindly wrote this article for us.**



*Mhoira with postgraduate doctors who are being trained in palliative medicine.*

*I really enjoyed visiting Mhoira in Uganda for a few days in April. As usual Mhoira was multi-tasking madly and we managed to cover a lot of very important developments in just a few days. Firstly, I saw her very busy hospital-based palliative care team in action. We then had a meeting with representatives of Yale, Makerere and Edinburgh Universities as we considered how we could help Mhoira and her team bring palliative care research and teaching into the hospital and university in Kampala. We were able to make good plans in this direction, as an international collaboration.*



*Participants in the research workshop*

*Mhoira was also able to plan a research workshop, further to the one we conducted together last year, and we managed to take forward a number of ideas into firm proposals: nurses from the radiotherapy department to study delayed presentations to radiotherapy; the surgical ward want to research better use of gastrostomy tubes in such patients; and we further discussed the methods that Dr Elizabeth is hoping to use for her Ph.D. We now need to resource these initiatives.*

*Finally, Mhoira took us to discuss with Hospice Uganda the development of the B.Sc. in Palliative Care. This exciting degree course started recently, and it will be a way that many people at all levels can learn about the principles and practice of palliative care.*

*Let me reassure everyone that the work in Kampala is going on strongly, if not frantically, and Mhoira deserves all the support we can give her.*

*Scott Murray*

**We are very grateful for Scott's enthusiastic support for Mhoira and the work of Cairdeas.**

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## India

**In February Mhoira made a short mentoring visit to India in conjunction with our partner Pallium India. She was accompanied by Ruth Wooldridge, an experienced palliative care nurse who has helped to develop palliative care services in many countries including India and Kenya. Ruth recounts their visit:**

*Over a million people require palliative care in India. To help address this huge and urgent need Cairdeas and Pallium India are sowing seeds of palliative care by providing training courses in many places. One such place is Uttar Pradesh State, with its population of 180 million people. Here, two doctors trained by Cairdeas are now developing a hospital based service in Lucknow at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI). Our visit was in response to a request from Drs Sanjay and Shakeel to assist them in developing the next stage of the services in Lucknow - in the community as well as the hospital, and in establishing a day centre.*

*The enormous need for palliative care was clear to see from visiting the two major referral hospitals in Lucknow. Patients wracked with pain and distressing symptoms, supported by anxious relatives, lined the hospital corridors of the oncology departments or were lying in the hospital grounds waiting their turn in the outpatients queue.*

*Currently at SGPGI there is a pain clinic run by Dr Shakeel where patients also receive emotional and psychological support. We saw Dr Shakeel very gently and professionally breaking the news to a father of four children that his cancer was very advanced. He gave the man and his wife time to sit quietly and try to make sense of what this meant, and then he helped them to make a plan for the ongoing care and support they both were going to need. Dr Sanjay, an anaesthetist, is keen to see a home based palliative care service, so that patients he and Dr Shakeel see at the hospital can be cared for at home, even as their illness progresses and they become less mobile.*



*Ruth (right) and Mhoira with Drs Shakeel and Sanjay*

*During our week there, Dr Mhoira addressed the medical faculty and I spoke with the nursing faculty. Nurse Alice, who has some hospice experience gained in Delhi, was seconded to join the pain team and has since started working in the community developing a home based service. Another nurse has also returned from receiving some training in palliative care and has joined the team.*

*Dr Mhoira and I also met with senior clinical and administration staff at King George Medical College who are very keen to start similar services. And we visited Kanpur which is a huge industrial town on the banks of the Ganges where there is no palliative care yet. Dr Mhoira addressed the Faculty of Anaesthesiology who showed great interest and will be starting a service later this year led by two retiring anaesthetists. It is the expertise and encouragement that Mhoira brings and her knowledge of the local situation that enables health care professionals to feel that they can start a service and will be supported and mentored as they do so.*

*The Cancer Aid Society based in Lucknow is an organisation that has done much to raise awareness about cancer prevention and detection as well as the need for developing palliative care services. They have played an important role in advocating for morphine to be available to use in pain relief. They have also raised funds for a purpose-built Day Centre where people can attend for therapies such as massage and reflexology, attend art classes, relax in a comfortable setting, and have clinical support and care from a nurse.*

*Cairdeas supporters can be confident that its work is appreciated by clinical staff as they continue to increase palliative care services, and making a real difference to patients and their families.*

## CANCER AID SOCIETY

**Cancer Aid Society is a secular, not-for-profit, Indian NGO, working throughout the country to combat cancer. As well as promoting effective treatment of cancer sufferers, through their various programmes they are raising awareness of the huge human cost of cancer and seeking to promote its prevention and early detection.**

**To find out more visit their website at [www.canceraidssocietyindia.org](http://www.canceraidssocietyindia.org)**

## Saudi Arabia

**As part of an Initiative to Improve Cancer Care in the Arab World (IICCAW), in March a conference was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. There were international experts from the World Health Organisation, USA, UK and other European countries, including Mhoira.**

The main aim of the conference was to assess the current state of palliative care services in the Arab World, and begin to formulate a strategic plan to develop these services over the next 10 years. An ambitious goal, and the challenge now is to put it into action.

## Our new trustee - Andrew Tait

**At the beginning of the year we were delighted to welcome Andrew Tait to our Board of Trustees. Andrew will be a great asset, adding to the strength and breadth of skills of the trustees. Already he has facilitated our Strategy Day which was held in Aberdeen last month.**

As Andrew says, "My heart lies in supporting development in the developing world". He has considerable experience working in mission and development, including spending six years with Sight Savers International as a Regional Programme Officer, initially in Africa and then India. He has also worked as a Mission Partner in South Africa and Guinea Conakry.

Now back in the UK, he is Director of his own company which provides Accreditation Services to companies throughout the UK. And he is a postulant in the Third Order of the Society of St Francis (TSSF).

Married to Ruth, they have a son Nico (18), and daughter Lucy (13).



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## Could you be a Cairdeas representative?

**You may feel that all of Cairdeas' work is overseas. But in fact an important part of Cairdeas' mission is to raise awareness in the UK of the need for effective palliative care in developing countries. And we are of course dependent on those who share our concern to support the work of Cairdeas.**

To this end we are encouraging our supporters to promote Cairdeas in their particular situation – for example at work, in their local church or other organisation they are a part of, or maybe just among their friends and neighbours. And this is where you could step in: with just a small time commitment, you could encourage your friends and colleagues to find out more about the work of Cairdeas. For example, you could:

- **distribute copies of the Cairdeas Newsletter (2 or 3 per year)**
- **write articles for your work or church newsletter – we will give you lots of regular information to help you**
- **suggest people hold a Cairdeas party to buy fair trade goods – or you may want to host one yourself – or some other fundraising event**
- **promote Cairdeas 200 by making leaflets available in e.g. church vestibule or other information area**
- **and encourage people to pray regularly for the work of Cairdeas – we will send you Prayer Letters to inform this**

Cairdeas will give you all the support and resources you need. You and your friends really could make such a huge difference to people's lives as you enable others to join with us and bring hope to people at a time of real need in their life. If you are interested or just want to find out more, without making any commitment, then please contact **Jacqui Mackintosh on 01224 276293 or [info@cairdeas.org.uk](mailto:info@cairdeas.org.uk)** .

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## The Resistance Campaign

Quite likely you will be aware of the recent moves in the UK to legalise assisted suicide and possibly euthanasia, including the End of Life Choices Bill currently before the Scottish Parliament. A leading disability rights group recently launched 'The Resistance Campaign' which calls on all MPs to sign a charter pledging their support for 1) providing good services to disabled and terminally ill people, and 2) opposing any change in the law to allow assisted suicide or euthanasia. We invite you to consider signing their petition which can be found at: **<http://www.theresistancecampaign.org.uk/petition/>**

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## Use your expertise for Cairdeas

As mentioned previously, we are now making applications to various trusts and similar organisations for funding to support the range of projects that Cairdeas is involved in.

But this is a time-consuming process. If you have experience of applying for funds in this way, or of managing projects to budget, and can offer some of your time to Cairdeas – even just a couple of hours a month – then we would be delighted to hear from you.

**Email to [info@cairdeas.org.uk](mailto:info@cairdeas.org.uk) .**