

CANADIAN VELLORE LUDHIANA COMMITTEE

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LUDHIANA REPORT

Expansion of Services to Rural Areas

Almost 75% of India's population lives in villages, but 75% of the health care facilities are located in cities. Many villages do not have access to good quality health care. CMC Ludhiana has been providing medical aid to rural areas through special camps and small satellite hospitals.

Two more satellites have been added to the program in 2007. The Pahwa Charitable Hospital in Hambran is now under CMC's direction, bringing care to 47 local villages. Out Patient Clinics for gynecology, ear nose and throat, paediatrics and ophthalmology have been set up twice a week and are well attended.

The community in Malerkotla approached CMC to provide out patient services, including X-Ray and laboratory facilities. The local Al-Kausar Welfare Trust, a non-profit community organization, has donated the facilities. Many patients have been brought to CMC for follow up admissions, procedures and surgery. The Trust also provides transport and meals for the medical staff and dentists who visit the facility on a daily basis.

Medical and Dental Charity Clinics

The Medical Charity Clinic will be moved into the New Out Patients

Department with better access and more space. This will increase the number of people who can be cared for. All services, medications and refreshments are free of charge. If admission to hospital is required, patients are admitted to the free care wards. Local donors and overseas contributors cover all these costs.

The Dental Charity Clinic is held twice a week at the Christian Dental College. The numbers attending are encouraging. All services, medication and dentures are provided free of charge. As well, Dental College staff visits villages in a 100 km radius of the hospital.

Project Smiley provides free dentures to poor and elderly people in the remote villages. So far, about 800 sets of dentures have been fitted, improving general health, morale and confidence for the elderly. Local charitable groups defray these costs.

Betty Cowan Research Centre

Two research fellows, two biostatisticians and a graphics team are now at work in the new Innovation and Research Centre. They are assisting faculty from several departments to set up research projects. Dr. Neeta Sinnapah, from the MD Anderson Centre in the United States, will become the new Head of Innovation. Her background in paediatric oncology, genetics, and stem cell research will be very advantageous to the Centre.

Medical Council of India Inspections

CMC had requested the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to increase the number of medical student admissions from 50 to 100 seats for the 2008/09 academic year. Consequently, the Medical Council of India (MCI) conducted a series of inspections of the hospital and college. A number of deficiencies were identified in faculty, institutional facilities, clinical material and other infrastructure. A deadline was given to CMC to rectify these problems.

The Friends of Ludhiana UK and the Ludhiana Board USA have already provided funds to help with renovations and upgrading. Most of the renovations have been completed. However, there is still work outstanding. Facilities in the nursing and physiotherapy programs, student hostel accommodations, common rooms and other training facilities are still needed. Our Committee has also offered to send funds if needed.

Although it has been a very tough year for the administration, they feel confident that with God's guidance and the support of friends from overseas, they have been able to accomplish much that will enable them to continue to train high quality Christian medical, dental and paramedical professionals.

Dr. Kusum Soni's Report

This is an excerpt from Dr. Soni's report as the western representative for the Committee.

I took on the responsibility to inform students in British Columbia, about study opportunities at CMC

Ludhiana and various courses under the Non Resident Indian (NRI) quota.

Consequently, three students applied to CMC for the MBBS course and one for the BDS course this year. One student from Abbotsford, BC was successful under the NRI quota.

In July, I returned to the Department of Physiology at CMC, as Associate Professor in Biophysics. During my stay in Ludhiana, I participated in departmental academic activities including: final examination of the outgoing first year class, various scientific workshops, and institutional grand rounds. I conducted an evaluation of examinations and interacted with the post-graduate students attending their thesis presentations.

Altogether, I have spent almost six months at CMC Ludhiana this year. I also assisted the administration with several pending issues:

- 1) Follow up of the Jail lands with the Director General of Police, Chandigarh,
- 2) Follow up with the Joint Secretary, MCI for the approval of M.Ch. course in Neurosurgery,
- 3) Follow up with Dr. Malti Thapar, the political nominee of MCI from Punjab regarding our pending inspection,
- 4) Gave positive input to Dr. Pramod while designing the curriculum for newly starting paramedical courses in CMC Ludhiana from this year.

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VELLORE REPORT

New Director Appointed

On September 23, Dr. Suranjan Bhattacharya was commissioned as the new Director of CMC Vellore. It was a time of great thanksgiving for 107 continuous years of service to the sick and the marginalized in South India.

Dr. George Chandy eloquently passed on the torch to the new leader and his team. "The call is to look up to the Lord for His guidance, to identify the needs of the people whom we serve and to look ahead with innovative ideas and strategies to meet the exciting challenges in the future," said Dr. Chandy.

Needs

Although India is reducing poverty levels and experiencing great economic growth, the per capita GDP is only slightly higher than sub-Saharan Africa. Nearly 380 million still live on less than one dollar per day. Malnutrition affects more than half of all children in India. 2.5 million Indian children die every year, accounting for one out of every five child deaths worldwide. This is a huge challenge to CMC as their ministry is to serve the poor, the marginalized, the underprivileged and the needy.

Outreach for 2006/2007

In the 2006/2007 year on a daily basis, outpatient attendance surpassed 4,600; 1,787 inpatients occupied hospital beds and 92 clinics provided services. Total inpatients for the year were 102,273. Total outpatients numbered 1,563,226. Of these, 1,217,384 were looked after at the main hospital. The remainder,

345,842, attended the Community Health and Development programs, the Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs (RUHSA), the Low Cost Effective Care Unit, Ophthalmology services, and the Mental Health Centre. This outreach is immense.

Tsunami Rehabilitation Services

Also under RUHSA, Tsunami Rehabilitation Services continue on an ongoing basis. Counseling on alternative employment opportunities and vocational training are provided. In the past year, 70 young men were given skill-based training at the RUHSA Community College. Another 40 were trained in a local polytechnic school. Medical camps and a mobile health clinic visit the villages on a regular basis to monitor health and treat illness.

Free and Subsidized Care

About 76 % of the beds in the main hospital are in general wards where the cost of care is subsidized by CMC. Ten to 15% of all admissions are treated completely free of charge with the balance receiving some subsidy depending on their income. The Person to Person program encourages donors to fund the hospitalization of the poor. Last year, 4,222 patients were assisted in this program. A donation of \$150 would cover the cost of admitting and treating one patient. There is also a Person to Person Endowment fund that you may contribute towards. Interest from this fund is used to subsidize the treatment of needy patients.

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Dear Friends:

I am very pleased to report that our western representative, Dr. Kusum Soni, is actively promoting the work at Ludhiana in British Columbia. Recently, she participated in several Diwali events in Abbotsford and a radio talk show in Punjabi from Surrey. The Committee would welcome other regional representatives to take on the responsibility to promote Vellore and Ludhiana in their area. Do let me know if this is possible.

As supporters of these two Christian Medical Colleges and hospitals, we show our concern for those in need of health care, and we share in the work to provide excellent Christian education. In June 2007, *India Today* ranked the top 25 medical colleges in India. Vellore was ranked third and Ludhiana 14th. As minority institutions in India, this is remarkable.

Your continuing support through financial donations and prayer is vital to both institutions. You enable the staff to provide healing to all, regardless of income or status and you give hope to the poor. May we strive to be instruments of God's peace.

Sincerely,

Helen Flanagan, Chair

Let me take into my heart, those who suffer more than I do

Those whose pains and needs are greater than mine.

Let me make room, a large inner space, and take in the pains of the poor and the sick.

However weak I may feel, I am strong enough to bring comfort

To a brother or sister in greater need.

May I use my short life, not to lament my lot or the state of the world,

but to reach out in love to those who suffer more than I do.

By Joe Mannath

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The Vellore-Ludhiana Committee, 23 Farmview Cres. TORONTO ON M2J 1G5

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