

Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada

Ministering God's love through medical training & care at CMC Vellore & CMC Ludhiana since 1913



Committee News

Dear Supporters,

As reported in our June newsletter, we the committee, have been working on our new agreements with CMC Ludhiana and CMC Vellore aiming to complete them and get them signed by this Fall. With much emailing back and forth we were able to fine tune our Memorandums of Agreement so that all parties were satisfied and happy to sign them while still meeting Canada Revenue's requirements. With this advance work done, we (Doug Virgin (Chair) and his wife Val) planned a trip to both Ludhiana and Vellore to complete the signing, and meet with administrators in order to set up a



Richard Smith, Dr. Gareth Tuckwell & Doug Virgin

practical system of implementing the new agreements.

En route to India we stopped in the UK to meet with the heads of two sister organizations, Friends of Ludhiana UK and Friends of Vellore UK.

We had been in communication with them to coordinate our support for the two CMCs and avoid needless duplication. Upon landing at Heathrow Airport, Doug and Val drove directly to meet with Richard Smith and Dr. Gareth Tuckwell of Friends of Vellore UK in Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Two days later we were able to meet with Dr. Keith Hine and his wife Maralyn of Friends of Ludhiana in the little village of Ditchling.

In our meetings we were able to gain a much better understanding of the support these two charities provide to Ludhiana and Vellore respectively and also found that we have some common causes we support. These areas are not duplications of each other but additions; meaning, for example, more poor patients received medical care they couldn't possibly afford because we are all contributing to the same funds.



Maralyn Hine & Val Virgin / Doug & Dr. Keith Hine

Before we knew it, we were flying from London to Delhi. Some of our attempts to pre-arrange our travels in India had failed so we weren't quite sure how we were getting from one place to another but we were confident; God would get us there somehow!

"My work is for a King." Dame Edith Brown, founder of CMC Ludhiana

Ludhiana News

We began our week in Ludhiana by meeting with the Director, Dr. Abraham Thomas and several others we were introduced to as they joined us. Dr. Thomas shared some of his vision and some of his concerns for CMC Ludhiana. We went on to discuss ways in which the Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada could effectively help CMC even though our contributions are relatively small in comparison to the overall budget. This gave us an excellent perspective as we went on to meet with many different staff throughout the week.



Hanging outside Dr. Thomas office is a map with tacks showing locations throughout India where CMC Ludhiana alumni are working in Mission Hospitals. What a great reminder of the purpose for which this institution was founded and a powerful statement that it still fulfills that purpose on a larger scale than ever before!

We don't have space to share the many meetings we had with staff but will highlight those that involved our current projects. Our **William and Zelma Virgin Memorial Scholarship in Medicine** was the focus of discussion with Dr. Bobby John, the principal of the Medical College. With each of our scholarships we needed to ensure those who are responsible are aware of the new requirements contained in the agreement we were about to sign.

By Thursday we finally had all the details of the Memorandum of Agreement ironed out, including the schedule for the **Helen Flanagan Memorial Scholarship in Nursing** which will be established in the coming weeks.



Doug Virgin & Dr. Abraham Thomas signing the new agreement.

For some time now VLCC have been considering the field of Palliative Care as a future project. Our next meeting was with Dr. Pamela Jeyaraj, a radiation oncologist who is heading up this very new initiative at CMC Ludhiana. Some of the challenges include patients who cannot afford the



Dr. Pamela Jeyaraj and her palliative care team.

drugs needed for their treatment, homes where special beds cannot fit through the door and finding or training enough staff to carry out the home visits that are so vital to this sort of work. We met several more times during the week and came away with the impression that this is an area where we could really make a difference.



Dr. Bobby John – next appointment – going green!



*Dr. Sheena Singh, Head of Physiology with Val Virgin – we had several discussions with her about how to make the **James Ashwin Memorial Scholarship in Physiology** an effective encouragement for students to choose Physiology as a specialty.*



Vice Principal of Nursing, Mrs. Seema Barnabas, Val & Principal of Nursing Mrs. Ponnamma Singh – we discussed our new nursing scholarship which will be established later this month.

Vellore News

Sunday was an 18 hour travel day to get from Ludhiana to Delhi via train, Delhi to Chennai via plane and then taxi to Vellore. On Monday morning we had a tour of the main hospital campus with Pushpa Louis of the Public Relations Office. Even though it's a very large complex, every walkway, corridor or waiting room was a hive of activity. The Outpatients Department alone sees 7,000 patients per day! Next, Jonathan Hamaran showed us the models and plans for the new 1500 bed campus CMC Vellore are planning to build outside the town. This was followed by a lunch meeting with Dr. Biju George who looks after foreign fundraising and any projects where foreign money is involved. After lunch Mary Anslum reviewed the PTP Fund and other funds that provide financial assistance to patients who cannot afford the treatment they require. VLCC have contributed to two such funds; you can find the stories of patients we have helped in our June 2014 newsletter.



Pushpa Louis with Val

Monday evening we were privileged to witness the processional for the 2014 Medical Graduation. It was both beautiful and moving but even more uplifting was the



thought that here were another batch of young doctors ready to go out and serve in a world where love and compassion is rare!



Tuesday began with visiting the Director, Dr. Sunil Chandy where we were given an excellent overview of both the existing work of CMC Vellore and the future expansion plans that will hopefully bring some relief to the currently over burdened facilities. Once again we were taken with the care and compassion that the leadership here exemplify!



Director, Dr. Sunil Chandy with us

Medical Superintendent, Dr. C.E. Eapen, who we met next, shared his concern about "Code Red" days – this occurred 5 times in the past month, All 4 emergencies were full and any new patients, sadly, had to be turned away with the very real risk of a life or lives being lost.

VLCC offer 3 nursing scholarships, the **Gladys Hamilton**, the **Anna Gupta** & the **Vellore Ludhiana Scholarship** so seeing Superintendent of Nursing, Dr. Jeyarani Premkumar was paramount.

Val then became "Professor Val" as she presented a seminar on patient pre-operative teaching & preparation.



Mary Anslum with Val



Professor Val

The grand conclusion to the day was dinner at "The Big Bungalow" where we signed the new Memorandum of Agreement with Dr. Chandy.



All signed and ready to go.

Space does not allow talk of the many other facilities such as CHAD, LCECU, RHUSA, the Rehab Institute, CHTC, Leprosy Clinic etc. This will have to wait for future newsletters.

In Closing

The primary purpose of our trip to both CMC Ludhiana and CMC Vellore was to officially put our new Memorandums of Agreement in place but we brought home with us so much more than just signed copies of these documents! We were unexpectedly and deeply impressed with the dedication, compassion and care we found in all the staff we met. Each one seemed to be a living example of the mottos Edith Brown and Ida Scudder adopted when they began: "My work is for a King" and "Not to be ministered unto but to minister." To this day, this is the spirit we found in each place!

Some of the highlights in Ludhiana included Dr. Abraham Thomas' and Dr. Sheena Singh's insights into how our James Ashwin Memorial Scholarship in Physiology can become an effective incentive for students to specialize in that field and Dr. Pamela Jeyaraj's passion to see the new Palliative care programme reach into the community and grow from its infancy into a vibrant means of practically ministering to patients and their families in the spirit of Christ. Everywhere we looked, we found equally dedicated staff who wanted to serve to the best of their ability, not for their glory but because, "Their work is for a King!" We also came home with numerous ideas for new projects that could "make a significant difference" in people's lives.

In Vellore, Director, Dr. Sunil Chandy said it best when he said, "Our staff are here for the right reason." In our many conversations we found this was clearly the case. Ministering to those needing care was the absolute focus! When we asked Dr. Sunil Abraham, head of the "Low Cost Effective Care Unit" what the greatest need in his facility was, without hesitation he responded, "prayer." Prayer for the very needy patients, prayer for the staff and prayer for his initiative to make "family medicine" an option for specialization upon graduation. He sees the crying need for "family medicine" in India but little or no opportunity for medical grads to specialize in it. This is a huge undertaking including lobbying the government to recognize this need and approve "seats" in medical colleges for study in this field. Dr. Abraham could have talked about needing money for many different aspects of his facility - the patient beds are hard sheet metal with no mattresses (something he would like to change) but praying for this work is something we can all be involved in even if we have no financial resources from which to give.



Dr. Sunil Abraham, of the LCECU

Our current projects at CMC Ludhiana:

*The William and Zelma Virgin Memorial Scholarship
The James Ashwin Memorial Scholarship in Physiology
The Good Samaritan Fund
The Vellore Ludhiana Committee Scholarship in Nursing
The Helen Flanagan Memorial Scholarship in Nursing*

Our current projects at CMC Vellore:

*The Anna Gupta Family Scholarship in Nursing
The Vellore Ludhiana Committee Scholarship in Nursing
The Gladys Hamilton Scholarship in Nursing
The Development Office Emergency Fund
The PTP Fund*

We would love to tell you many more of the amazing stories from CMC Ludhiana & CMC Vellore but hope that this has at least given you a little taste of not only the incredible work that is being done, but the spirit in which it is done. This is what separates the care given by the two CMC's from government or private hospitals. This is what draws patients there!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support!

DONATION & CONTACT FORM

Please complete and mail to:

Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada, 722 Coxwell Ave., Toronto, Ontario M4C 3C2

Tel. 416-921-2301, email: vel.lud@sympatico.com, please visit us on the web at: www.cmchospitals.ca

Please make cheque payable to: Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada.

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