

Canadian Vellore Ludhiana Committee

*Ministering God's love through medical training & care at CMC Vellore & CMC Ludhiana
since 1944*



Committee News

Welcome to our newsletter for November. We have some encouraging news to report both from here at home and from CMC Vellore and Ludhiana. Before getting to that, I'd like to ask your indulgence while I address a question that I have asked myself many times. That means you may well have asked it yourself.

Why should we continue to support the Christian Medical College and Hospital in Vellore and in Ludhiana when India is bursting onto the international scene as a new economic force and power? Surely they don't need our help anymore, do they?

One could answer such a question by quoting studies and statistics (there are many available) but I think a more memorable way would be to look at a true story written for the 2011 yearbook by one of the assistant professors at CMC Ludhiana, Dr. Arpit Matthew. In it he is addressing his students, the future medical practitioners of India, pleading with them not to just become part of the existing medical system in India, but to remember their calling to minister and heal with compassion in Christ's name. His article harkens back the mission statement that opens the yearbook: **“to train young men and women in the spirit of Jesus Christ for the healing ministry of the church of India.”**

The story begins: “The young lady was brought to the small hospital in Jharkhand gasping for breath 2 hours after she had been bitten by a snake. She was quickly intubated and given the life-saving snake venom antitoxin. For the next 2 days the junior doctor manually ventilated her ‘round the clock as she slowly recovered. Her hand that had received the bite developed fasciitis and required debridement. But after a week, she was ready to go home. Her bill, after heavy discounting came to RS. 1500 (\$ 27 C) - mainly for the medicines that needed to be replaced. After a day, the husband brought in the money to pay the bill. Out of interest, the doctor asked him how he found the money. He said he had taken a loan from the moneylender - the interest, Rs. 10 (\$ 0.20 C) for every Rs. 100 (\$ 2.00 C), every month, 120% annual interest. The young doctor was horrified, that was a life sentence. With the enthusiasm and altruism of youth, he offered to pay the money, which could be returned to him if and when possible. But the farmer was resolute. He said it was actually a good bargain. He would never be able to repay the loan but he would be able to work on the moneylender's farm for the rest of his life and be sure of at least a meal a day. And, when his young son was a little older, he too could work and this way, his family would be secure ... for the sake of a medical bill, he signed away his family into a lifetime of bonded labour.”

The writer goes on to remark that: **“this is a true story. It is no ‘one-off’ event. It is repeated nearly every day in the villages of our country...”**

This striking story raises our sense of compassion but the part that says; *“it is repeated nearly everyday,”* shouts out that there is still an astounding need for medical practitioners to be the arms, hands and feet of God's love in India.

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

"Not to be ministered unto but to minister" – Dr. Ida S. Scudder, founder of CMC Vellore

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One other significant quote from the same article: *"The number of doctors, even from Christian medical colleges, who serve in 'areas of need' are so few and far between."*

We need to do what we can to encourage young Indian healthcare workers to go and be ambassadors of God's love. To respond as they see the need and provide compassionate care to the best of their ability.

These photos from Ludhiana show an example of where this story may well be repeated many times over.



The "park" outside the front door

Other news:

Over the past several months we have made a number of new acquaintances who are very interested in the work in Vellore and Ludhiana. Of these, a number have indicated their desire to work with the committee in our support of the colleges. We are very encouraged by this and look forward to them applying their gifts and abilities to the cause.

On the more unexpected side, Linnea Good, a singer, worship leader and songwriter who travels North America ministering with her family, approached us with her desire to visit CMC Vellore, to offer her musical and scriptural gifts to the community there. It became clear that this would be an excellent opportunity to create a greater awareness of CMC Vellore in Canada. After immersing herself and her family in the Vellore community, she would then be able to share about CMC Vellore 1st hand with her North American audiences.

She has presently received an invitation from Vellore and we are hoping that she will also be able to spend some time in Ludhiana, as well.

At our last committee meeting we had (via long distance phone) a very compelling report from Dr. Ed Dubland about the need for palliative care in India and in particular northern India.



Yes, this is a family "home"



The clinic CMCL operate for this community



Linnea Good

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Dr. Dubland has done substantial research and as a result made practical recommendations as to how such care might be provided in the future.



Lalitpur Palliative Care Project with their homecare nursing programme

In light of Dr. Dubland's concern and extensive work we are pleased to report that CMC Ludhiana officially announced the commencement of their new Outpatient Palliative Care Department at the September Board of Governors and Society meetings!

Committee member, Rev. William Virgin travelled to Ludhiana in September to represent us at the Board and Society meetings.

Some of the highlights from his report are: speaking at many chapels and devotional times; conducting seminars sponsored by the Oncology department (with other departments invited to attend). Subjects included: Intro to Anger Management; Argument, Conflict, Respect, Art of Listening; Healthy Relationships, Power and Control vs. Equality; Healthy Communications & Forgiveness.

Bill also visited with staff, including the principals of the Nursing, Medical and Dental colleges and the finance department where they were able to sort out some of the financial situations surrounding the scholarships already set up by the Canadian committee.



Bill giving a seminar

Ludhiana is developing new guidelines in regard to scholarships. These are necessary before we can finalize all the details of our two new scholarships: the Helen Flanagan Scholarship and the James Ashwin Scholarship. We are, however, preparing all the required details so that we can proceed as soon as the guidelines are available.

Vellore News

CMC Vellore welcomed their new director, Dr. Sunil T. Chandy on September 24th. He has taken up his new position "running" by identifying crucial areas in need of immediate attention and setting up task forces to research and report. Many of the issues are related to the sheer volume of patients and the human and physical resources needed to provide for them. Some of these reports have already been submitted.

In 2010, the committee established endowment funds for two nursing scholarships. One in memory of Annamma Mathews Gupta, a former nursing instructor, and a second in the name of the Canadian Vellore Ludhiana Committee. This year we followed that up with a third in memory of Gladys Hamilton. Currently the two 2010 funds (which were started with smaller amounts of capital) have not yet produced enough income to be awarded. It would enable CMC Vellore to grant these scholarships sooner and on a regular basis if we could add approximately \$ 5000 to each fund.



Dr. Sunil T. Chandy

We were able to set up the new fund this summer with substantially higher capital and it is expected to have accrued enough income to be awarded in the fall of 2013. In the near future we look forward to bringing you the names of the scholarship recipients so that we can prayerfully support the students we are assisting financially.

This is graduation time in Vellore, a time to celebrate new batches of nurses, doctors and allied healthcare workers ready to take their place in serving God as they care for their fellow man.



You may recall that this summer we contributed to the "Emergency Fund." Here are two stories of how these funds are used. They echo our opening story.

Mohammed is a six year-old boy who had a tumour near the pituitary gland, at the base of the brain. He had already had two operations to remove the tumour, but in early October he was referred to the Radiation Therapy Department. Normally poor patients are treated with the Cobalt machine, which is cheaper to operate and usually gives adequate results. However, greater precision and minimum radiation exposure were essential, so it was decided to use the high-end Linear Accelerator. Because the family had exhausted all their resources a grant of Rs. 60,000 (\$ 1100 C) was provided. This paid for a CT scan, and all the costs of the radiotherapy. CMC is so pleased to be able to help families like this in time of need.

Suicide is very common in India and has been the subject of research by the CMC Community Health Department that has received global attention. The causes are usually linked to financial issues (particularly debt) and family difficulties, but school students have also attempted suicide over bullying and disappointing exam results. Often the effects of failed suicide attempts, by poisoning, have a devastating health impact. CMC has been working on ways to

reduce the time to get victims to hospital (a local volunteer team on motorbikes) and to develop technology for more rapid detection of the exact poison and dose. 23-year old Shanmugam was admitted to the ICU with acetaminophen poisoning in October. This causes serious liver damage, often irreversible. He needed both intravenous infusions and close monitoring in the ICU. The drugs alone came to Rs.18,000 (\$ 330 C) and a few days in the ICU brought the total to around Rs.40,000 (\$ 730 C). Shanmugam is unemployed. Both he and his retired parents rely on his brother's income. There was nothing to spare. Rather than force the family to choose between debt and the young man's life, a grant of Rs. 40,000 was provided from the Emergency Fund, which saw him out of danger.

In Closing

After reading this letter, can you agree with us? Our continuing support of CMC Vellore and CMC Ludhiana is not only worthwhile but vital. We thank you for it!

At this time of year when we celebrate the coming of our saviour, God with us, Emmanuel, we on the committee want to wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas and a happy New Year.

DONATION & CONTACT FORM

Please complete and mail to:

The Vellore Ludhiana Committee, 23 Farmview Cres, TORONTO, ONTARIO M2J 1G5

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

Please make cheque payable to: Vellore Ludhiana Committee.

Date: _____

Please accept my gift of \$ _____ to be used:

As needed CMC Vellore CMC Ludhiana Divided equally Other: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____

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