

VELLORE LUDHIANA COMMITTEE of CANADA & CMCHOSPITALS.CA

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

Dear Friends & Supporters,

Christmas is the time of the year when we celebrate the light of the world who came down to Earth on that first Christmas. The two Christian Hospitals and medical schools in Ludhiana and Vellore continue to shed that light every day through their dedicated work. We in Canada are privileged to add our encouragement and support to the daily efforts of all the staff and students there. This newsletter will show you some of the what is happening through the funds that have been sent, and some of the projects that are yet to be established or are in the planning stages. The needs are great! Thank you for your ongoing gifts and interest in this work. Please share this letter with any others you may meet whom you feel may have an interest in the work.

We wish all of you and your families a wonderful Christmas, and God's blessing in the year ahead. We would be happy to hear from you or answer any questions, or just get to know you!

Committee News:

LAUF – Learn And Uplift Foundation

LAUF is a Canadian charitable foundation whose mandate is to provide free, practical on-line skills training especially for disadvantaged youth. After taking considerable time in getting to know the executive and the work of LAUF, the Committee felt that collaboration with LAUF had tremendous potential to benefit the work of both CMC's. Earlier this year, two of the LAUF executive travelled to CMC Vellore and Ludhiana and met with representatives to explore the possible ways the work of LAUF could be beneficial. It was felt that training courses could be developed for various health issues such as educating the public, training for work in health support jobs in hospitals or clinics and training in home care for families with sick ones at living at home. These courses could all be extremely helpful to reduce the amount of staff time needed for teaching.

In October, LAUF and the Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada drafted and signed a Memorandum of Understanding to begin working together to develop and deliver courses that the CMC's deemed to be worthwhile and helpful in carrying out their work.

Who We Are:

Douglas Virgin, Chair:



Like his brother and fellow Committee member, Bill Virgin, Doug was born in India. In fact he was born in the old "Brown Memorial Hospital," in Ludhiana, the original hospital for CMC Ludhiana! Until his family's return to Canada at the age of 10, he attended Woodstock School, Mussoorie when he wasn't up to mischief around the CMC grounds. Doug has always carried a love for India and its people in his heart so when his sister Helen Flanagan could no longer serve as the Chair of the Committee, he saw this as a practical way to show his love for India. One of his aims for the Committee is to find CMC alumni who wish to get involved and eventually take over the charity's operations. This would secure the future of the Committee and its service to the CMC's for years to come.

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

Ludhiana News

James Ashwin Memorial Scholarship in Physiology – First research Project Nearing Completion



Over two years ago, Dr. Nancy Job began her Physiology thesis and research project to study the effect of anemia on expectant mothers, their unborn and newborn children.

We are very pleased to announce that Nancy has now completed her research and is now compiling her data and writing her thesis. In the near future, she will be attending a Continuing Medical Education event at Gov't. Medical College, Chandigarh and the National Conference of Physiology at King George's Medical College, Lucknow, where she will be presenting her findings.

In her Power Point report, Nancy expresses her thanks to the Ashwin Family, VLCC and you, our donors: "We are thankful to the donors and the VLCC for the scholarship provided to aid this research work in the Department of Physiology, Christian Medical College, Ludhiana."

Why the study? - a summary of her work and why it is so important for much of the population of India.

- Every year, nearly 1 million pregnant women and, children under five, die directly or indirectly due to anemia. In the Punjab, 38% of women are anemic.

Effects on Mothers:

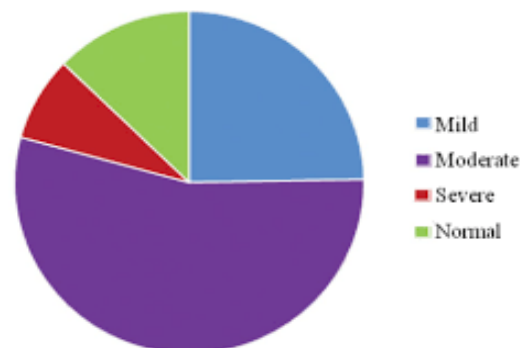
Severe or untreated iron-deficiency anemia during pregnancy can increase the risk of having:

1. Abortions
2. Infection
3. Postpartum depression
4. Heart and lung problems

Effects on Babies:

1. Birth defects involving incomplete development of the brain and spinal cord
2. Low birth weight
3. Pre-term birth
4. Delayed growth in infants and children

SEVERITY OF ANEMIA IN INDIA



Lessons Learned:

- Anemia continues to be a serious health problem in India. Little knowledge of nutrition, spacing between children and maternal and child health continues to be a problem from one generation to the next.
- Effective guidelines and education needed for girls re: regular ante-natal check-ups, regular intake of iron and folic acid; teaching about good nutrition and balanced diet to improve outcomes for mothers and babies.
- In India, around 90 percent of children are still struggling to get a proper diet, crucial for their development - iron deficiency is the most common type of anemia seen in Indian children.
- Children deprived of a healthy start - millions will bear the impact of anemia in their early years and throughout their lives. E.g. prone to infection & stunted growth.

We congratulate Nancy on her work, wish her well as she presents it and hope to see mothers and children in India benefit from implementation of her studies!

Vellore News

New Director for CMC



On September 23, 2017, Dr. J.V. Peter became the new Director of CMC Vellore. CMC's constitution limits a Director to a five year term of service so this is a normal and an expected change. We wish to thank Dr. Sunil Chandy for his remarkable leadership and wish him well as he resumes his normal medical activities.

Please pray for Dr. Peter as he assumes the responsibility of CMC Vellore as it faces serious legal challenges from the government which could completely undermine the purpose for CMC's very existence. We feel CMC will be in "very good hands" based on this statement from Dr. Peter:

"When I entered Christian Medical College Vellore in 1982, in awe as a medical student, little did I realize that God had a special purpose in bringing me to this great institution. I am humbled and honoured by this high calling of God. CMC is God's chosen place of healing for millions. My desire is that it should be a model of compassionate, Christ-centred, holistic, cost-effective, quality health care enabled by technology."

NEET & Common Counseling – CMC Vellore Suspend Medical Admissions for 2017

CMC Vellore made headlines in many of the major news sources of India this Fall. The Times of India, The Hindu, The Indian Express, Edex Live, and other major media have headlined that CMC was suspending their medical admissions in 2017 as a statement of protest to the government. Their being forced to accept the combination of the NEET national medical entrance exam and "Common Counselling" was not acceptable. Consequently, CMC have admitted only one student to the MBBS programme (normally 100 students each year) and one student to the Super Speciality programme for 2017.

The administration have also launched an appeal to the Supreme Court of India based on Indian Law that CMC qualify for exemption because of their "minority status." Since 1993 there have been a total of 18 court cases over similar attempts from the government to gain control of the admissions. The first 17 have all resulted in a legal decision in favour of CMC; the 18th is still before the court.

Dr. Sunil Chandy, director of CMC at the time, released a statement saying; "CMC is not against NEET. We have accepted NEET. We have had it for two years. They're asking us to comply with common counselling. We will not do that because it completely wrecks the vision and mission of wanting to train students who are to be sent to the rural and disadvantaged areas of the country."

In order for CMC to continue it's historic mission to provide first-rate medical care to the rural and disadvantaged communities of India, they must be able to interview and choose students whose aspirations include this vision. If common counselling were to be accepted, this would no longer be the case.

This court case is vital to the mission of CMC. Next year will mark 100 years of providing medical education in India. CMC would like to celebrate this knowing they are free to continue with their mission as they have through all those years!

The case itself was to be heard in the summer but has been deferred many times. Finally on Dec 6, it was begun but there was insufficient time for the court to reach a decision. Dr. J.V. Peter has informed us that the case is scheduled to continue on January 10, 2018. Please be in prayer that a favourable decision for CMC can be reached so that the "heart" of their work will be able to resume in the coming year!

In Closing

NavJeewan Community Church

Once again, Pastor, Prakash Masih and the NavJeewan Community Church, graciously hosted an evening for us to present the work of CMC Vellore and Ludhiana. We took the opportunity to present the great need for prayer for the upcoming appeal to the Supreme Court of India on whether to exempt CMC from the NEET/Common Counseling legislation. We also presented the proposed Palliative Care Project (see June 2017 newsletter) in Ludhiana. After the service we were treated to delicious Indian food and a generous donation received from the evening's offering. This will go towards the Palliative Care Project.

Please let us know if your church or organization would be interested in hosting an event something like this – we would be more than happy to present some aspect of the work in India!

CMC Vellore North America Reunion (GOTC) Coming to Toronto this June

We are excited to let you know that the annual North America reunion for alumni of CMC Vellore, commonly known as, GOTC, will be coming to Toronto in 2018! The dates are, June 21-24, 2018 and it will be held at the Markham Hilton Suites. The theme is to be Bagayam and the new Director, Dr. J.V. Peter is expected to attend. Interest has been running very high so why not set those dates aside and be a part of it? Members of our committee, the Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada, are planning to be there to help with various aspects of the reunion. We would love to meet you in person! The local organizer, Dr. Thomas (Ponna) Thuraiatnam says, "all are welcome" even if you aren't an alumnus of CMC Vellore! For information on registering, go to: <http://vellore-gotc.com>.

Wrapping Up

In this newsletter we have covered things to celebrate and things that call for our support in prayer and finances. We'd like to specially mention the proposed Palliative Care Project for CMC Ludhiana. It is a larger project than we have been able to consider in past years. Dr. Ed Dubland is planning to return to Ludhiana in the new year to meet with all concerned in the hopes of seeing it all begin. We are actively looking for potential partners to come alongside us so that this much needed, specialized form of care can be administered to local patients and taught to medical students who will, in turn, take it to the communities they serve after graduating.

We wish each of you a very special Christmas season of peace and joy as you wrap your presents, bless your family and friends and celebrate the coming of the Christ Child, Emmanuel, God With Us!

DONATION & CONTACT FORM

Please complete and mail to:

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

Tel. 416-921-2301, email: info@cmchospitals.ca, web: www.cmchospitals.ca,

Facebook: www.facebook.com/www.cmchospitals.ca

Please make cheques payable to: Vellore Ludhiana Committee of Canada or CMCHOSPITALS.CA

Date: _____ Please accept my gift of \$ _____ My preferred use:

☐ As needed ☐ CMC Vellore ☐ CMC Ludhiana ☐ Divided equally ☐ Specific Project: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Donations will be used as directed unless a project is fully funded or is no longer active. In this case, funds will be redirected where needed at VLCC's discretion.