



Maun Homeopathy Newsletter

Project News, Events & Updates - direct to you

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Celebrating Our First Year

We have just celebrated our first full year of running the homeopathy clinics in Maun. "The homeopathy has changed peoples' lives" says Stella, co-ordinator of our biggest clinic at the Lutheran Church.

The clinics have been made possible by 3 key factors: the generosity of individual donors; the time, hard work and commitment given by volunteer homeopaths; and the strong and warm partnership we have developed with local agencies in Maun. Arun Mushiana, Volunteer Homeopath, says "The homeopaths are so loved here, and at the clinics we see daily miracles." Word has spread and people living with HIV and AIDS travel from all over Botswana to get treatment from us.

It is not unusual to hear from a client that they have arrived the day before from their village 500km away to join the early morning queue at one of our clinics.



Above: consultation at the Lutheran Church Clinic

Volunteering in Maun: The Homeopaths' Stories

"It's hot, hard work and there's so much suffering but volunteering in Maun is the most important thing I've done in my life," Julia Hunn.

Ten volunteer homeopaths so far have donated their time, energy and money to run the clinics in Maun over

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the last year taking unpaid leave to do so. Our heartfelt thanks goes to them - Margaret Ecclestone, Noam Bar, Lesley Murphy, Julia Hunn, Jane Harter, Cleo Cameron, Arun Mushiana, Elaine Weatherley-Jones, Penny Rowe and Bridget Allison.



Above: Local spinach celebrated at Boseja Clinic

Lesley Murphy tells the story of one lady: "She is HIV+ and I was asked to go and see her as she'd been struggling with possible malaria for 10 days. I did a home visit, and found her on a mattress on the floor, covering her eyes, as she couldn't cope with light, barely able to speak as she was so weak, and she hadn't been able to eat for a long while. I prescribed a course of homeopathic medicine for her and the next day her family took her to hospital where the doctor also thought it was malaria, but she was starting to improve so wasn't given any treatment there. The following day when I visited, she was outdoors, eating an apple, and playing with her grandson, completely recovered!"

"One of the most outstanding memories I have of the people that I met and treated in Botswana is of how much they appreciated the service, feeling valued as people, not treated as HIV patients. One comment overheard in the waiting room (where people would wait patiently all day) was "how lucky we are to have this service in Maun - I was in Francistown and people with HIV there feel outside of society, but here in Maun we feel accepted and valued".

Elaine Weatherley-Jones

Partnership in Action

All the clinics are full and we have provided 2,000 consultations over the year, treating more than 600 people. Most come back for follow-up treatments because they feel the difference the homeopathy makes. Our partners remain excited by the results of the homeopathy and want the clinics to continue. We have two committed interpreters, Wasanapi and Gaothape for those people who don't speak English. People wait patiently to be seen and one by one they are, each being given the time they need to describe their symptoms and tell their story. There is no rush as we try to create a calm, respectful and attentive atmosphere. Every client is important and the homeopaths try to meet their individual needs.



Above: Outside Lutheran Church Clinic

Sometimes this is difficult, for example if someone doesn't have enough food for herself and her family and arrives hungry and desperate. In these situations we talk with our partners and work out an action plan which may involve asking for short-term food supplies from a local Pastor who does emergency relief work, and then contacting the authorities to ensure a food basket is delivered. The beauty of working in partnership is that we can refer clients to the people who can help if we can't.

Care of Dying People:

Not all our clients get well. By the time some people come to one of our clinics for the first time they already have advanced AIDS. Often we visit these clients at home as they are too weak to make it to clinic. In Botswana there are no hospice or terminal care services apart from what the hospital provides.

The home visits we do are therefore crucial in providing care for people who are often left to die at home with no support except for what their family can provide. At present it is so hot in Maun that the home visits must be done in the early morning. Homes for

the poor in Maun consist of traditional thatched huts or the modern breezeblock shacks with tin roofs.

There is rarely electricity and water is carried from communal standpipes. Family life is lived out of doors except when you are ill, dying and confined to an oven-like room

Training Local People: Exciting News!

The School of Homeopathy in Devon has kindly offered free places for the first two students we recruit for training in Maun on their acclaimed Distance Learning Course. So I had meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Health in Botswana to discuss our joint proposal.

The response was very positive and we hope to start training early 2007. This is a very exciting development as it means the beginning of ensuring that homeopathy becomes a permanent part of the fabric of healthcare in Maun, run by and for local people.

New Clinic: We Continue to Reach Out

"When in Maun I heard that there were people living in a district called Senonnori, at least 5 kilometers from the nearest clinic who were too ill to travel in for treatment. In discussion with ACHAP*, which runs local HIV Support Groups, we decided to start a new outreach clinic there. Penny Rowe reports "One of the highlights of working here was the meeting with the Chief of the community at Senonnori on the outskirts of Maun to start the new clinic.

The meeting was conducted outside the kogtla on a very hot day under a shady tree and we all stood throughout. I had not expected to see a chief dressed in a crisp white shirt, smart trousers and waistcoat, trainers, sunglasses and a Nike cap! My visions of an African chief were demolished in that moment. He said he was delighted that we were coming to give health care to his community, as many of them were very sick.

I felt privileged to be at the initial meeting of this new clinic. It was a special moment".

Penny Rowe"

*African Comprehensive HIV and AIDS Partnership.

Hilary Fairclough, Clinical Director