

# Dr. Andrew Greer's Travel Diary



My time here is sadly coming to an end and the last month has been spent finalising several projects in preparation for leaving Uganda.

## HIV Accreditation

After an official inspection of the clinic from the Chief Medical Officer from the Ministry of Health, 5 visits to the ministry and daily phone calls for at least a month, the accreditation letter was signed by the Director of Health on 17<sup>th</sup> June. Living Water is now officially accredited to provide free HIV services, including testing and treatment.

One of three main suppliers in Kampala provides the resources required, and unfortunately it took a further 3 weeks for the clinic to be placed on a master list for supply. I have found patience within me I never thought I had. In fairness most accreditations can take up to 1 year but our doctor friends from Buikwe were a big help.

Living Water will provide HIV services every Tuesday and Friday. This includes testing, counselling, and treatment with anti-retrovirals all free of charge. Records will be kept for each patient and they will be encouraged to attend fortnightly for review.

I would like to say a huge thanks to two dear friends of mine who have contributed a lot of money in getting this service up and running. Gordon and Razeena Smith kindly received donations for Capstone instead of wedding gifts last year. Huge thanks!

## Musana – Living Water Partnership

Musana Jewellery is a local social enterprise that provides stable employment and educational opportunities for women. It was founded by 3 American women and currently employs 10 artisans who make jewellery for local sales and export.

Musana places a large emphasis on the importance of healthcare and a big challenge is providing access to reliable and affordable health services. We have established a partnership with the women and provide the following services:

- Free consultations
- Cost price laboratory tests
- Discounted or free medication depending on the prescription
- Antenatal services

The women do not pay anything when they come to Living Water. Instead we have a designated logbook which is reviewed by both managers at the end of the month. The discounted bills are then deducted from the women's wages. This scheme will improve healthcare for the women and increase the profile of the clinic.



## Teaching Facility

Weekly teaching sessions are now in full swing and the staff continue to rotate and take it in turns to present topics. We have constructed a teaching facility with teaching aids and so far have covered current practice in malaria, immunisation schedule, and assessment of the acutely unwell patient.

## Kawolo Hospital

Kawolo Hospital is the local government hospital approximately 15 minutes from the clinic by foot. Many patients come to Living Water who are too sick for primary care management and subsequently need referral. We have had to transport some patients ourselves and unfortunately I have experienced poor services all round. We took a 1 year old baby with severe malaria and anaemia who needed an urgent transfusion. We were not allowed to go direct to the paediatric ward without registering at reception. There was no one at reception. We also needed an urgent grouping and cross match of blood to transfuse the baby. There was no one at the laboratory. There was no sense of urgency with respect to the baby that was dying. Thankfully I was able to persist and get the transfusion in time, but I don't imagine everyone is so lucky. It's frightening that this is likely a daily occurrence.

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Gordon and Razeena Smith”



## Refurbishment

Most of the refurbishment is now complete. During my visit we have renovated the entrance and waiting room, consultation room, dispensary, inpatient rooms, and dental room. Construction of 3 new rooms has started in order to accommodate HIV services. The smallest of these rooms will be used for medical records and the remaining 2 rooms for HIV counselling and management. As of the beginning of July a budget has been drafted to complete these rooms (plastering, painting, doors and windows), and work started on the 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Several friends are raising money for Capstone and climbing Mount Kilimanjaro. We hope that the generous donations will enable these rooms to be completed in good time.

## Time Out

I've managed to sneak a bit of rest time in amongst clinic work, the highlight being a weekend rafting the Nile in Jinja. It's pretty well known for rafting and kayaking on account of the gnarly grade 5 rapids. Good day all round and all 30 of us stayed at Nile River lodge, partying to varying degrees and waking up to monkeys playing in the garden and an amazing view of the Nile.

A good friend and employee at Living Water moved into a new house and had a housewarming party. Such traditions involve a blessing of the house, numerous speeches, and lots of great food. It's coming to the time where I'm starting to say goodbye to people and this was one of those occasions.

We'll also be having a staff supper this week where I'll try my hand at making some of the local cuisine.

I've had many farewell meals at friends' houses, and a wonderful trip to "The Lawns" in Kampala, which provided some delicious springbok and crocodile.

## The end is nigh

It will be extremely tough leaving Uganda as I have made some great friends and feel well and truly settled in Lugazi. There is a great deal of potential for the future, both at Living Water and Lugazi in general. I plan on coming back next year and seeing how the services recently set up continue to run, and work alongside the staff.



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