



Uganda Cancer Trust UK

Trustees' Annual Report
Year ending 30 April 2020

Registered charity: 1131235
37 St Mary Street, Chippenham, Wilts, SN15 3JW
ugandacancer.org.uk



Overview

During 2019/20, we continued to support the work of our Ugandan partners, the Mulago and Makerere Palliative Care Unit (MMPCU) in Kampala and also the Uganda Cancer Society.

In the last few months the main challenge to both our partners has been the impact of the pandemic on the lives of cancer patients and organisations supporting them. The country is under severe restriction to try to keep the virus at bay, and to date this seems to be succeeding. There have been only a few hundred confirmed cases and no deaths. However the effect on daily life is extreme, with no public transport allowed, and business suspended. For cancer patients, the challenge is how to get to hospital for their treatment, and for patient hostels, how to ensure safety of residents with prevention and protection measures. We will be making donations from our reserves to help, but are also working on a fundraising campaign to provide extra support.

The Oxford BOAT committee have continued their very generous support for Liz Nabirye as Information Nurse, with additional help to allow additional visits of the volunteer teams. We are deeply grateful for all this support, and it is much appreciated by the team at MMPCU. As always many different people and organisations have also supported us, so I hope this report will give a flavour of the work we are trying to do and the use we are making of your generous help.

Christine Whitehouse
Chair

Uganda Cancer Trust UK

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Objectives and Activities

Uganda Cancer Trust UK is a UK based charity raising money to support cancer treatment, education and care in Uganda. More than 60% of cancer deaths occur in developing countries, but only 5% of cancer spending.

The money we raise goes towards:

- Supporting individuals suffering from cancer in Uganda, where the treatment needed far exceeds their ability to pay.
- Supporting Ugandan organisations who are trying to improve cancer treatment, care or education
- Raising awareness of the growing problem of cancer in Uganda

Cancer is a huge global problem, but by working with local partners in Uganda and others already engaged in these issues we are sure we can make a difference.

Achievements 2019-20

Our work to date with MMPCU

We continue to support both the volunteer programme and the post of Information Nurse. Liz and Mike Minton maintained the links with the team when they visited Kampala again in the summer. An example of the work done by the volunteers is given by Vicky Kirabo, one of the volunteers:

Juliet (not real name) is a 52 yr old, diagnosed with Cancer of the cervix, sick for the last 7 years and admitted to the Uganda Cancer Institute.

She is under the care of the Palliative Care team working alongside her primary doctors, with the volunteers supporting her through her pain and symptom control. The volunteers were able to visit her and establish a good rapport with the main caregiver, Juliet's sister. Juliet had advanced disease and her kidneys were failing and thus getting weaker every day. The doctors requested a procedure that would help to revise her kidney problem, but it was too expensive and the family could not afford it due to financial constraints. This was very distressing to the daughter and sister, watching their loved one in agony and in a confused state. It seemed really a hopeless situation for them.

However, the volunteers were able to liaise with the Social Worker of the Uganda Cancer Institute to raise some funds for the procedure and this was able to bring hope and a smile to the caregivers who would always cry because of not being able to meet the financial obligations.

Through the regular visits by the volunteers, the caregivers were able to share their worries and fears, which included not being able to transport their loved one's body if she died in the hospital. This was a very painful feeling but as volunteers we informed the clinical team who then facilitated the patient discharge and also referred them to a community Palliative Care centre for continuity of care.

The family appreciated the time, help, care and love they were shown at their darkest moment and they had this to say *"Thank you for loving us and visiting us. You did not know us and we did not know you but this has created a relationship between us which I would not want to end! You should extend the love to the rest of the other patients too"*.



She died a few days after she was discharged back home but the family was very grateful and have remained in touch.

So being a volunteer in Palliative care is both a positive and meaningful experience and it is a privilege being able to help those in need. As a volunteer, it is important to be present for the vulnerable persons and to follow them in their various physical and spiritual distresses. However, it is crucial to possess knowledge, skills and life experience, as well as a clear role, with regular support from my mentor.

As long as what I am doing is help to the patients and families, I am happy with what I do. It does not matter what it is, as long as I am of assistance, I am happy.



Volunteers bringing hope through offering psychosocial and spiritual support to a patient and carer on the ward.

Our work to date with UCS

During the year, the Uganda Cancer Society reached out to us for assistance with kickstarting their objective of providing a Patient Sanctuary in Kampala. This is an ambitious project that has several hurdles to overcome. They already have support in principle from the Speaker of the Parliament in Uganda, but need to attract wider support in terms of access to land and funding before they can move forward. We have been in discussion with them to provide a small financial package to enable detailed building plans and costings to be undertaken. This will require specific fundraising, but the Covid-19 pandemic has unfortunately halted these plans temporarily.

Support for cancer patients

We responded to a funding request from Advantage Africa for treatment for Richard, a person with albinism who had skin cancer on his back, requiring extensive surgery and aftercare. He was unable to work because of the pain he was in and his wife was struggling to support the family. Luckily the treatment has been completely successful, and Richard is now cancer free and living a normal life again.

We also helped with funding the treatment of one of the MMPCU team of volunteers, Ronald, who was diagnosed with a carcinoma on his thigh requiring immediate attention. Thankfully he has had a



lot of support and is now undergoing follow-up chemotherapy and ongoing monitoring of his condition.

And we also had a direct approach from the sister of a patient in Entebbe. We were able to put her in touch with MMPCU who validated the need, and supported her with advice and information. This approach worked well, and we intend to continue to work with MMPCU in this way and to provide them with a dedicated Treatment Fund to draw on.

Financial Summary

Receipts

Receipts were from individual fundraising activities, and a donation from BOAT, a church based charity in Oxford, specifically to continue funding the information nurse project and the volunteers. Gift aid is collected on all money raised in the UK and is an important supplement to our receipts.

Payments

We continue to make the agreed payments to MMPCU for the volunteer program, and for the information nurse project. Payments were made by request to Advantage Africa, to MMPCU and direct to a patient, to assist with the treatment costs mentioned previously in the report. The only expenses incurred by the charity were the monthly JustGiving fees (account now closed, as we have moved to a new platform), and a membership fee for Uganda Cancer Society.

Reserves

At the end of the year, the net reserves of the charity were £4,946, with no ongoing commitments.

Administration

Trustees

Jenny Aranha, Treasurer
Cathryn Hannah, Secretary
Christine Whitehouse, Chairperson
Dr Michael Minton, Palliative Care Consultant
Elizabeth Minton, Patient Care Support

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