

Gastro Team pass on Training and Skills in Malawi

Professor Tony Morris (Consultant Gastroenterologist), Dr Melita Gordon (Consultant Gastroenterologist) and Sr Christine Ireland (Nurse Trainer in Endoscopy) recently visited an African government hospital in Blantyre, Malawi, as a “seedcorn” visit, funded by the Tropical Health and Education Trust (THET).

THET is a charity which forges Health Link partnerships between health organisations in developing countries and their counterparts in the UK. Dr Gordon explained: “The aims of the visit were to make contributions to training and support for endoscopy staff in Blantyre, to help improve the endoscopy services provided to the people of Blantyre, and to explore how we could form a long-term Health Link between our Trust and the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital (QECH) in Malawi.” To complement the training, the Directorate also donated several pieces of decommissioned endoscopy equipment for use in the Blantyre hospital.

In a 2-tier teaching approach, Professor Morris provided hands-on training in basic endoscopy skills for four trainee doctors and clinical officers, and training-the-trainers teaching and skills-enrichment for two consultants, while Sr Ireland worked through improvements in practice and protocols with both experienced and trainee nursing staff. In addition, the team were requested to give several lectures, tutorials and practical demonstrations to the hospital departments, and also attended ward rounds and the HIV clinic.

“The trip was very busy, and we learnt a huge amount about the obstacles facing an African hospital. It was a fantastic opportunity to build relationships and support the development of healthcare staff and services in Malawi. We hope that the QECH staff got as much out of the project as we did, and we will continue to develop our partnership, particularly in the areas of training and equipment.”

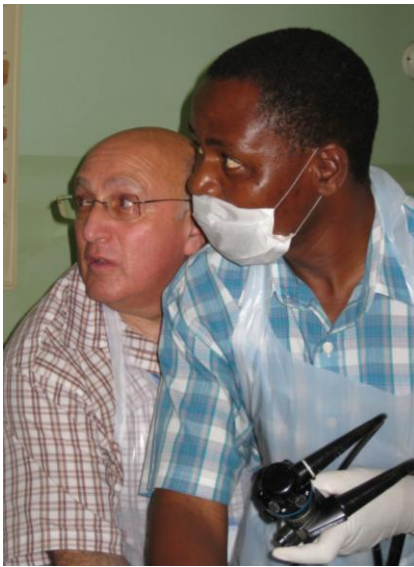
((Please find 4 pages of photos))



RLBUHT Gastroenterology Unit staff with donated equipment ready for Malawi



Sr Ireland working with nursing staff on equipment decontamination and patient-related nursing processes



Professor Morris teaching endoscopy skills to Malawian trainees (doctors and clinical officers)



Teaching insertion of a Minnesota tube using a locally-made model (a coke bottle!)



Visiting the anti-retroviral treatment clinic for AIDS patients