

Soap Matters

Saving lives with clean safe care at birth

May 2015

Issue 9

Ethiopia

Three members of NHS Grampian Facilities and Estates Team recently made a visit to our partner, Felege Hiwot Referral Hospital in Bahir Dar, Northern Ethiopia.



Soapbox has been working in partnership with the staff at the hospital for over a year, assisting the strengthening of infection prevention and control.

They were also able to identify solutions to problems with oxygen concentrators, washing machines, emergency generators and operating lights.

Gary, Malcolm and Graham from NHS Grampian spent a very busy and productive week at the Ethiopian hospital. The primary focus of their visit was to provide immediate fixes to faulty equipment, provide training to the local maintenance team and support the development of basic policies and operating procedures for sustained maintenance on an ongoing basis.

Gary described the visit as:

"One of the most memorable experiences we have ever had"

Our partnership with Felege Hiwot Hospital, which has 400 beds and serves a population of around 7 million people, will continue and is enhanced by the involvement of NHS Grampian and their commitment to assisting the

Their visit was a huge success, training maintenance staff and increasing tap functionality by almost 70% in the three floored Maternity and Child Health Building.



Soapbox Action

42 out of 51 taps changed and functional! That's 82%.

Great Achievement

sustained and further improvement of maintenance arrangements at the hospital.

Soapbox and Felege Hiwot Hospital would like to thank NHS Grampian, Gary, Malcolm and Graham for their

generosity in volunteering and their willingness to share their skills. Their efforts will undoubtedly go a long way to providing clean safe care at birth for mothers and babies.

International Women's Day



International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future.

reproductive health were discussed, and on Friday 6th March exhibited at the University of Aberdeen's conference, "Inspiring Women: Challenges and Overcoming Barriers".

Soapbox was delighted to join with thousands of organisations, charities, educational institutions and women's groups across the world to celebrate and support this year's International Women's Day theme, 'Make it Happen'.

Soapbox was also delighted to be part of the Aberdeen City Council celebrations on the 8th March at the Beach Ballroom. This provided an opportunity for women from varying nationalities to come together to celebrate the Day. We would like to thank all those who gave their support at the Beach Ballroom calling for 'every woman's right to clean safe care at birth.'

This year, to mark the occasion, Soapbox participated at the GLOW Conference in London, where issues around maternal, newborn, child and

The Gambia



The final consignment of clean birth kits (CBKs) arrived in The Gambia recently for the completion of our research there. The feasibility study of CBKs is being conducted in collaboration with the Medical Research

Council in the Upper River Region of the country.

The study draws comparisons between the use of CBKs given to women in during antenatal care compared to those given to women when they arrive at the facility for delivery.

The CBKs have proved popular with women, results of the study are expected to be published soon.



Soapbox Know-How
Clean Birth Kit Feasibility
Study
Results due soon!

Trustees

Soapbox is delighted to announce the appointment of two new trustees to their Board. Former NHS Grampian, Medical Director, Roelf Dijkhuizen and Head of Service Improvement at NHS Grampian, Jenny Ingram have both been involved in supporting the interests of Soapbox for some time and their assistance in the strategic leadership and governance of the organisation is valued.



Roelf Dijkhuizen



Jenny Ingram

Fond Farewells

Next month we say a sad goodbye to Natalie Gibson, who has been in the post of Soapbox Intern for over a year. Natalie has given dedicated support to our team and although we know there is an exciting new adventure ahead for her, she will be sadly missed by us all.

We are now recruiting a new intern, check out our website for more details.



Bangladesh

Soapbox has recently returned from a trip to Bangladesh, the primary purpose of which was to share the Bangladeshi results of the WASH & CLEAN study.

BRAC, who led the Bangladesh arm of the study, hosted the event which attracted a wide variety of stakeholders from public, private and NGO facilities, government agencies and organisations such as WaterAid, Engender Health, USAID, and ICDDR, B. The results were met with much interest and enthusiasm from attendees. Following the morning's presentation of results, a workshop was held with participants working in groups to discuss the striking findings of the study and identify key action points for moving forward.

One of the main findings of the study was the lack of formal training provided to cleaners working on the maternity unit; a separate meeting was held with key stakeholders earlier in the week to discuss existing training and training needs of all levels of cleaning staff working on the maternity unit.

The meeting resulted in a lively and informative discussion, with great support for the proposed development of a cleaners' training package. A further meeting with BRAC Training Division provided insights into the best modes of delivery and methods of training, and some of the challenges that may be faced along the way.

Soapbox were also able to make visits to health facilities during which environmental cleaning and current provision (if any) of training of cleaners was discussed. An opportunity to visit the BRAC run Rayerbazar Maternity Clinic provided Soapbox with the opportunity to discuss with ayas (cleaners) their important role in maintaining the cleanliness of the clinic, the challenges they face, and to observe them in their daily routine.

Soapbox are excited about the next steps in developing the cleaners' training package and for the difference it can make to providing clean safe care at birth.



Soapbox would like say a huge **thank you** to all those who have supported us financially over the past few months.

We would especially like to thank Albyn School, St. Columba's Church of Scotland and Cults Academy, all of whom held events to raise funds for Soapbox.



Albyn School visit