

*Saving lives  
with clean safe  
care at birth*

# Soap Matters

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## Updates from Ethiopia

*University of Aberdeen Medical student Anna Rose reports from Ethiopia...*

Just over a month into my second visit to Felege Hiwot Referral Hospital, Bahir Dar, and I'm already adapted to daily life at the hospital, the 12 hours of sunshine, 32°C temperatures, endless coffee and even eating injera at least four times a week! My first visit was 18 months ago and there have been some big changes such as the new hospital gate and road, and some not so big – such as curtains on the labour ward.

This time around, I am still working in obstetrics and gynaecology but doing a retrospective audit and case-note review of post-caesarean section (CS) complications with a particular focus on surgical site infections. In a relatively short time, I have made surprisingly good progress: identifying all CS deliveries in a two-month period, requesting and collecting the medical records.

So far, my time has been split between collecting and analysing data and spending time on the ward, in clinics and in theatre, both in obstetrics and gynaecology but also general and plastic surgery. I was fortunate to be at Felege when an Aberdeen plastic surgeon was also visiting so was able to observe some fascinating cases.

I'm looking forward to spending some more time here and continuing to benefit from the great partnership between Soapbox and Felege Hiwot.

*Dr Jolene Moore from NHS Grampian has also visited Felege Hiwot and told us about her next steps...*

It's 2 months since my last visit and it feels like I never left! There have been many changes – a new paediatric unit which has allowed for a larger neonatal unit, and a new cancer centre and training centre underway. There are also plans for a new postnatal unit allowing extra space for an obstetric high dependency area.

With the launch of the regional Safe Surgery initiative, I'm becoming involved in developing anaesthesia services in the area. Felege Hiwot has been selected as lead hospital for a cluster of healthcare facilities for the programme. In the coming months, I'll be assisting with anaesthesia needs assessments and training at the facilities and helping to develop guidelines and standards for anaesthesia.

I am delighted that I have been able to spend a more prolonged period of time in Ethiopia, and I hope that I can continue to help to improve services at Felege Hiwot and the broader region.



*The new gate at Felege Hiwot Referral Hospital*

## Zanzibar HANDS Workshops

The HANDS project – funded by the Medical Research Council – has been examining the barriers to good hand hygiene across 10 high volume maternity units in Zanzibar. Soapboxer, Georgia Gon, has been working on the project with colleagues at the University of Aberdeen and the Zanzibar Ministry of Health. This phase of the project came to a close with a final workshop in March. The workshop focussed on interpreting the findings and was followed by group discussions with orderlies about use of the results to promote good hand hygiene practices.



## Bringing Cleaning Guidelines to Life

Cleaning procedure guidelines form an essential resource of any health facility in order to be able to provide a 'gold standard' to work to and ensure that tasks are carried out in the most efficient, effective and safe way possible. As part of the environmental hygiene and infection prevention participatory training package pilot Soapbox conducted last year in the Gambia, we presented the facilities involved with cleaning procedure guidelines.

While the cleaning guidelines were a welcome addition to the maternity units in the Gambia, they relied upon literate staff to read through and demonstrate each task to the cleaning staff whose, often poor, literacy skills meant that the text-based guidelines

were less accessible to them and of limited use as a reference document.

In response to this, Soapbox has been working with graphic artist, Kieren McDonald, to produce illustrated cleaning guidelines that can be used by low-literate staff. We excitedly anticipate feedback from the pilot of the first draft of the illustrate guidelines which is going ahead in the Gambia this month.





### 'Akwaaba' from Ghana

*Dr Jolene Moore reports from Ghana where she spent some time observing maternity units and exploring the potential for collaboration between The Soapbox Collaborative and Tema General Hospital....*



My first few days in Ghana are steeped in history, from gold trade to slave trade to colonialization and independence, an interesting introduction to the country which I reflect upon as I arrive in Tema, a busy industrial town hosting the country's major shipping port. It is here I find Tema General Hospital. The hospital hosts a busy maternity ward with over 7000 deliveries per year.

The hospital site with its pleasant grassy areas and outdoor walkways feels far removed from the major highway and busy roads just outside the gates. It's not long before I hear "Akwaaba", meaning welcome, and this continues throughout the hospital for I am repeatedly greeted with smiling faces and colourful uniforms and attire.

I spend the following days undertaking a series of observations throughout the maternity unit, which occupies almost an entire side of the hospital complex and is bustling with women and babies. These observations will help to provide an understanding of the main challenges for the unit, and assist with identifying areas which Soapbox may be able to support. Together with a number of meetings to determine the current set up and existing processes, this occupies my time.

Outside of the hospital, I grow used to my daily walks up and down Hospital Road in the tropical heat of this busy city and as my short visit draws to a close what sticks in my mind is the friendly faces, for these have remained throughout my time here and I'm sure they will greet those that follow me on our journey in this exciting new collaboration.

### Soapbox Event

### Maternal and Newborn Health: More than a Medical Issue

Powered by PechaKucha

**Belmont Filmhouse, Aberdeen, Thursday 4th May 18:30 - 20:30**

To celebrate International Day of the Midwife, we will be hosting an event which will explore the social and cultural barriers women face accessing safe clean care at birth in some of the most resource poor settings in the world. The evening will be hosted by BBC Scotland's Fiona Stalker and features speakers from WaterAid, NHS Grampian, the University of Aberdeen, and more. Topics will highlight the work being done internationally to prioritise quality maternal health services that respond to local needs and promote universal equity.

The format for the evening is creative and simple: PechaKucha means 'chit chat' in Japanese and refers to a format whereby presenters have 20 images and only 20 seconds to talk about each image making short, fast moving presentations and ensuring an entertaining evening!

**Tickets can be purchased in advance for £5 from the Belmont Filmhouse box office or on the door.**



### Collaboration in Myanmar

Our partnership with WaterAid is taking a new direction by assisting with a programme to improve maternity services in Myanmar. Funded by UNICEF, WaterAid is working with the Government of Myanmar and key stakeholders to assess the need for Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in health care facilities. This will seek to address current gaps in information on infection prevention and control (IPC) and good hygiene practices and build a longer term programme of improvements.

Soapbox will provide technical advice in our specialist areas of environmental hygiene, IPC and maternal and newborn care practices. We will assist with the development of the needs assessment

methodology and tools and training materials for local health professionals to undertake the data gathering and, finally, contribute to the recommendations for enhancements. This is an exciting new venture that provides an opportunity for Soapbox to contribute a programme of sustained improvements in maternity services in a new partner country.



### How the latest WHO/UNICEF tool is improving WASH in Healthcare Facilities

The latest WHO/UNICEF resource, the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Facility Improvement Tool (WASH FIT) was launched in February at the Quality of Care Network Launch in Malawi. WASH FIT is a practical guide providing a framework and tools for improving WASH in healthcare facilities alongside wider quality improvements.

Soapbox's Giorgia Gon and Suzanne Cross were among the experts, policy-makers and practitioners who contributed to the development of the tool which not only addresses water quality but sanitation, hygiene, health care waste and other aspects of environmental health, facility management and staff empowerment. The framework can be adapted for use in any type of healthcare facility. It encourages facilities to prioritize and maintain WASH improvements, focusing on actions and encompassing infrastructural changes, maintenance and repair as well as behavioural changes, such as hand hygiene behaviour.

The launch of WASH FIT marks impressive progress towards the goal set at the WHO/UNICEF Geneva meeting in 2015, of providing access to WASH services in all facilities, in all settings, by 2030. To date, the tool has been used in Chad, Mali and Liberia with a further five countries now at the early stages of implementing the WASH FIT framework. Further training in the tool is planned to take place, in addition to the development of plans for a WASH FIT app. You can find the WASH FIT tools at: [www.washinhcf.org/resources/tools](http://www.washinhcf.org/resources/tools).