

Refresher

The well-established CMF/MMA annual refresher course for missionary doctors and nurses took place from Monday 21st June-Friday 2nd July at Oakhill College in north London. 22 doctors and 14 nurses attended.

Programme

The first week was mainly spent on medical, nursing and primary health care topics. These included malaria, medical education, fertility and infertility, psychiatry (both community and the psychoses), practical perinatal care, community medicine, a session on the UKCC for nurses, respiratory diseases, tropical medicine, AIDS - both clinical and community aspects, leprosy, sexually transmitted infections, midwifery, dentistry and hospital management.

The second week included surgery and HIV, the acute abdomen, ophthalmology, Information Technology as a missionary tool, wounds, burns and skin grafts, ethics,

medical imaging, physiotherapy, gynaecology, dermatology, trauma, tuberculosis, anaesthesia, bone and joint injuries, and ENT.

Other resources used were videos, CD Roms, and apart from handouts by the contributors there were over 100 handouts on topics written by Peter Bewes for the 'In Service Training Programme' in Uganda. Teaching Aids at Low Cost (TALC) had a bookstall from which orders were made and delivered before the end of the course.

The facilities of Oakhill College were largely available to the participants, including the chapel and the lovely grounds.

Some participants comment:

'At any one time a group of about 30 or so missionary doctors and nurses met over 12 days at the end of June for the annual Refresher Course. A few came part time, including a physiotherapist and the disabled occupational therapist husband and baby of one of the doctors. It was quite an intense time. Fitting in 48 hours

of lectures in twelve days between 9am and 9pm during Wimbledon fortnight is no mean feat!

Our days began, however, before breakfast with a short worship time, which lecturers and participants took it in turn to lead. We are grateful to the Lord for all of the course. Nevertheless, the morning times and the Sunday rest with services facilitated and led by Rev Robert de Berry were special times of encouragement and drawing close to the Lord. Our days ended in similar tone with one or another bringing an epilogue, usually from the Psalms. We had all come in need of professional update (our 'Martha' need). However, we also needed to commune with our God and to receive encouragement, forgiveness and healing from the Lord Jesus (our 'Mary' need).

We are indebted to the hosts Peter and Hilary Bewes as well as the staff of CMF and MMA for hosting and organising this refreshing course. We are grateful too for over 30 lecturers who kindly gave up their time to come and speak to us. Their current knowledge of medicine, nursing, physiotherapy etc mixed with overseas experience and enthusiasm was invaluable to us. We covered the range of medical and surgical problems and emergencies, we focused too on neonatal care along with obstetrics. There was helpful insight into nursing and midwifery, psychiatry, dentistry, tropical diseases, STDs and HIV as well as the approach to the community. Topics like teaching techniques, management, computing and ethics were also covered along with many other subjects of interest and value.

As colleagues who spend the majority of our time in the 'back of beyond', we are really grateful to be brought up to date as well as helped to see how the 'modern' can be helpful to us. We were glad to share experiences together in three Newsnights of what we have been involved in and what the Lord has done: communities helped, patients saved, churches established,



Photo: Peter Bewes

Hands-on with Professor John Wyatt

Review 1999



Photo: Peter Bewes

Psychiatrist Dr Christine Wright leads a workshop

churches growing and taking responsibility in their area, the strong force for good and for change of national Christian doctors and nurses in developing country health services beset with corruption.

For these times and much more we are very grateful. Neither we nor our mission organisations are very rich. Without Christian Medical Fellowship and its members together with the Medical Missionary Association and a trust fund from the former Nurses Christian Fellowship supporting us on these courses and standing with us in our overseas call, we and other colleagues are not likely to be able to afford to attend further Refresher Courses. We request you all, therefore, to share with us, and to keep subsidising this course which has been so invaluable for us - (our family need).

‘ . . . according to what what one has . . . Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality’ (2 Corinthians 8: 12-13).’

Andrew Mitchell
(Doctor, East Africa)

‘Please pass on to all at CMF and MMA my thanks and gratitude for another excellent Refresher Course for doctors, nurses and midwives working overseas.

This was the second time I have attended the course and felt it was as good, if not better than the previous course. The mix of lectures on professional topics plus update on current changes in practice and

interaction with other course participants was very valuable.

I hope the course will continue into the future as it is currently the only such course available for health professionals working overseas. I look forward to attending again during my next home leave and will recommend the course to other colleagues.’

Diane Norton
(Nurse, working with INF in Nepal)

‘ . . . fantastic refresher course, many thanks . . . ’

Gid Cox
(Doctor, en-route for South Africa)

‘It was such a good experience and I am very grateful that I was able to take part with three other colleagues from Germany . . . ’

Hans Martin Kilguss
(Doctor working in Pakistan)

‘I am a nurse midwife preparing to work under CMS in rural Uganda . . . For those who had returned from overseas it was an encouragement to know others were working in a situation similar to themselves. For people like myself, who are preparing to go, it provided important and relevant information’

Joan Macdonald

‘The sessions on primary/community based health care were very useful and there was adequate time for discussion’

Donald Brownlie
(Doctor, Malawi)

‘ . . . thank you for subsidising the course. The food and accommodation were excellent’

Hazell Newman
(Nurse, working with MECO)

‘ . . . the discussion on ethics and the introduction of e-mail and the Internet to us was very good . . . ’

Iris Schlagehan
(Nurse, home country Germany)

‘In addition we learnt much from one another, both about medical matters and about God’s work in many different parts of the world and in many situations.

I have written to Crosslinks who paid for me to go to ask them to encourage any missionary medics who are home on leave at the right time to attend future courses.’

Phyll Chesworth
(Doctor, Tanzania)

Refresher Course 2000

Booked for July 10th-21st at London Bible College. The course in 2001 is expected to revert to the earlier dates starting June 18th.