

Roger Harman African Travelling Fellowship 2018

Dermatology Teaching course for trainees in Ethiopia Oct 2018

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A joint UK-Ethiopia Dermatology Training Education project has been on-going for 12 years and has contributed to successfully boosting the number of well trained dermatologists in Ethiopia. The collaboration was initially set up under the guidance of Professor Peter Friedmann and colleagues with support and funding from the British Council. They withdrew financial support some years ago but the UK dermatologists commitment to teaching and Specialty exam process and oversight has continued, with the generous professional support of Prof Friedmann, Richard Weller, Sue Lewis-Jones, Chris Lovell, James Ferguson, Ruth Murphy and other colleagues.

Postgraduate Dermatology Training for all Ethiopia is based at the ALERT Hospital and Training Centre (The All Africa Leprosy, TB and AIDS Rehabilitation and Training Centre) and Black Lion Hospital in Addis Ababa. ALERT was established in 1934 and since 1965 has served as a national and international clinical research and training centre in Leprosy, TB and Communicable diseases. It has been a WHO Leprosy collaborating centre since the 1970s and a centre of excellence for HIV/AIDS since 2009. There are advanced services for Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery, Trauma and General surgery, Maternity and psychiatry on site. The University of Addis Ababa / ALERT Dermatology training programme was established in 2005 and been supported by experts from different countries over the years, the UK link has been the most sustained. The programme has been developed and overseen by Dagnachew Shibeshi, 'Dr Dan', Head of Department for most of this period. He has done an amazing job of securing new training posts in Addis, and recently in 2 other university centres, Jimma and Mekele. He has 15 senior colleagues who share the clinical workload and provide Dermatology surgery, Dermatopathology, advanced Leprosy, TB and Communicable Diseases services and a limited Contact clinic.



[View over Addis Ababa, from Entoto Hills](#)

I first went to Addis in Oct 2017 for 6 weeks at the invitation of Sue Lewis-Jones as Visiting Lecturer at Addis University and ALERT, to deliver general and paediatric dermatology teaching to the year 1, 2 and 3 dermatology trainees (45 trainees in all). Sue came for the first week and Susan Andrews for 4 weeks to establish the dermatopathology training programme. Suzy Leech and Aileen Taylor also visited for 1 week in Nov 2017. Lectures were scheduled for 8am and 12.30pm daily. We attended out-patient clinics between 9.30 and 12.30 each morning, joined ward rounds twice weekly and attended specialist clinics and labs. I lectured to the Paediatric and Community

Health department at their request and reviewed genodermatoses patients at either ALERT or Black Lion Hospitals. We discussed the international initiative on endemic scabies in Ethiopia, which was named a Neglected Tropical Disease by the WHO in 2017. The Ethiopian dermatovenereologists are global experts in the management of Leprosy, TB, HIV, Leishmaniasis and other communicable and 'Tropical' diseases and they have advanced Leprosy and TB diagnostic and research facilities on site. There is a Leprosy medical and surgical rehab unit on site and residential crafts workshop and accommodation for treated Leprosy patients who could not return to their communities. One of their biggest challenges now is endemic Leishmaniasis as the predominant infecting organism is *Leishmania aethiopica*, notoriously aggressive and treatment resistant. A whole in-patient ward is devoted to the in-patient treatment of Leishmaniasis in children and adults, most are on 45 day regimes of IL, IM or IV Stibogluconate, paradoxically not recommended as monotherapy for *L.aethiopica* (it's all that they have). In clinics they see the whole spectrum of skin disease from all forms of common and opportunistic infections, lichenoid dermatoses, eczema, psoriasis, lupus erythematosus, auto immune conditions, acne, keloids, skin lesions and cancers, drug reactions and genodermatoses. On the first day of our visit this year, we saw a young woman with TEN, which proved rapidly fatal. The in-patient facilities are severely limited, most of the hospital site does not have access to running water or bathing, and their medications are also restricted (vaseline is their sole emollient, no TCI, no immunosuppressives and no oral retinoids, no biologics).

Adult with vitiligo



The Dermatology Specialty exam (and year 1 and 2 exams) was held in Dec 2017, with Sue Lewis-Jones and James Ferguson as external examiners. All the year 3 candidates passed and were accredited. Of the class of 15, 3 stayed in Addis and the rest went to the provinces for their first postings as junior consultants. Richard Weller spent a 3 month sabbatical in Addis in May 2017 and Tom King, a dermatology trainee at Nottingham University, wrote his research degree (MMedSci in Medical Education) on the Ethiopian Dermatology Training Programme, entitled 'What are the local perspectives of postgraduate dermatology training in Ethiopia? – A qualitative grounded theory interview study', submitted in Aug 2018.

The University of Addis funded most of my travel and accommodation expenses in Oct 17. The Dermatology Dept and Addis University invited me back in Oct 18 for 2-3 weeks and Nigel Burrows volunteered to come for 1 week. In Sep 2018, Dr Mengistu (current Head of Dept) informed us that, in view of government funding cuts, the Dean of Medicine at Addis University could not allow funding of any visiting lecturers expenses. The British Council in Ethiopia gave a sympathetic response but their funds had been spent. We applied to the BAD for funding through the Roger Harman Africa Travelling Fellowship and without hesitation, they offered full travel and accommodation expenses.



Dr Mengistu Head of Department thanking Nigel and me, final day of teaching at the Training Centre at ALERT Hospital, Addis Ababa 13/11/2018

Nigel and I arrived in Addis to a warm welcome in mid Oct 2018 and delivered an intensive 20 hour teaching programme over 2 weeks on a pre-organized ranges of topics, the residents choice. It was well received and we have been invited back next year. Sue Lewis Jones and a colleague will return as external supervisors for the Dec exams. Our visit was a most rewarding experience, in terms of helping to improve the trainees' range of knowledge and confidence, providing some insight into developments and progress in Dermatology in other countries, forging contacts between senior and trainee dermatologists and experts here in the UK and providing a forum for discussion of complex cases from which we all benefit. One of the 2017 graduates from the programme wishes to train in Paediatric Dermatology and Sue Lewis Jones is in the process of designing a training programme to include clinical attachments in the UK.

In July 2018, the BAD and Richard Weller very generously hosted six senior Addis dermatologists at the AGM in Edinburgh. At the AGM, Dr Dan (Dagnachew) Shibeshi, Head of Dermatology at Addis University at the time, spoke eloquently of their progress towards developing a world class training programme and becoming self-sufficient in well trained dermatologists in Ethiopia, thanks in no small part to sustained UK dermatology support, which he gratefully acknowledged.



An Ethiopian Song and Dance evening and Ethiopian meal

