



## September 2024 report for Serving In Mission



### **In Partnership with ELWA Hospital Paediatric department, Monrovia, Liberia**

September 2024 involved higher numbers than August as children once again began presenting to the hospital seeking care as the rainy season eased off. The mortality rate also dropped significantly following the intense input and training carried out in August, and we are optimistic that this can be sustained throughout the rest of the year and beyond. This is a reflection of the dedication of the staff supported by various partners including the faithful donors who give via SIM.

### **Clinical Activities**

There were 283 admissions to the inpatient services (paediatric ward and emergency room) in September. The majority of these children were extremely unwell and would be dead if the hospital did not exist or have the dedicated supplies and hard-working staff supported by SIM. There were many opportunities for the staff to put into practice the training offered by the team.

The under 5 clinic treated 1105 new children with a total of 1896 consultations. Many of these consultations were for children who had potentially serious conditions which would

have led to deterioration if not treated soon. Malaria season has hit at a level unprecedented for this time of year and has led to many children presenting very unwell. This affects children suffering from malnutrition the hardest.

### **Special Malnutrition Update**

There were 111 admissions to the inpatient feeding unit, primarily from the under 5 clinic. Many of these children present with very severe malnutrition, often with a kwashiorkor subtype where the arms and legs become oedematous. These children are far too unwell to be treated at home, and ELWA hospital is unique in Liberia in providing the correct blend of therapeutic milks, antibiotics, antimalarials and most importantly caring nurses, doctors and physician assistants who are dedicated to the care of these children.

The outpatient feeding program treated 137 new children with 89 discharged as cured from the program. This left 105 children continuing on the program at the end of September. The children on this program continue to receive health education and regular reviews alongside the plumpynut to ensure that they are growing well and not falling behind medically, as well as deworming, antimalarials and antibiotics. We are thankful for God's continuing provision for the children who come through the ELWA Hospital.



### **Patient Story**

Baby Julian was just 6 weeks old. He tumbled into the ELWA Emergency department after a bundle of seizures which had terrified his mother and got her to the point of almost abandoning hope. In desperation she arrived at ELWA searching for some hope. She was very quickly moved onto a couch in the centre of the room where the whole team came together to try to help.

His fingers and toes were icy cold with so little blood going to them and an eerie stillness began to set in. Julian needed fluids, antibiotics and all sorts of interventions urgently or he was not going to make it. People tried again and again to find a way into his veins, pricking until every option had been exhausted. Even the two tibial plateaus had marks in them from attempts at an IO access.

Eventually a way in was found through the femur, against all odds and somehow through the chaos and confusion. Remarkably fluid started flowing, returning his blood sugar to normal and warming his hands. A few minutes later he was moving his fingers and starting to come back to life. Our team kept going, praying and pushing gently through the mists of chaos and illness to ensure that the child was able to get the fluids and feeds he needed.

Remarkably, the next day he was able to open his eyes and began to blink into life. The day after he was crying, and right after that was able to feed on his mother's breast once again. Soon after he was alert and responding to his mum's voice, settling gently as she soothed him. Just a week of antibiotics later he was able to go home, happy and well, giving his mum his first smile the day he was discharged.



### **Educational Activities**

- Active mentoring was carried out with a new physician assistant (PA) due to start in the under 5 clinic, in addition to an interactive didactic training session.
- Grand round presentations carried out by doctors on a weekly basis.
- Daily mentoring ward rounds carried out between doctors and nurses to encourage good practice.
- Improvement plan to create more compassionate care implemented on the paediatric ward.

### **Future Goals**

- Opening of a follow-up clinic for children suffering from chronic conditions to start Autumn 2024.

- Increased support for children less than 6 months old coming through the ELWA hospital in need of milk at home, due to start in October 2024.
- Improvement plan for under 5 clinic airflow to be implemented.
- Further ETAT plus workshops: October 2024: Bong County and December 2024: Buchanan.
- Opening of second facility in Bong county to inpatient care in October 2024.
- Ongoing partnership with Ministry of Health to train and mentor interns and other doctors coming through the paediatric ward, set to restart Autumn 2024.

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