

Soft Power Health

1st Quarter Update
2019

What's New:

Although 2018 was our most productive year yet, 2019 started off with a bang! In January, we had our busiest Clinic day ever, in which our staff saw and treated 233 patients! This was beyond capacity, but it has shown us that Soft Power Health can manage to handle that many patients when the need arises. Also, despite Uganda's dwindling supply of birth control methods, Soft Power Health is still regularly able to provide thousands of women in need with family planning. This has been challenging, but remains possible thanks to our entrepreneurial nurses and good partnerships with other organizations, including different district health offices. Uganda's supply of family planning has been severely depleted due to a lack of foreign aid in this area and because the Ministry of Health did not order enough supplies for 2019. This quarter, more women than usual attended our family planning outreaches. One reason is that the local government health clinics had run out of the family planning methods they needed. Thank goodness Soft Power Health was able to help!



A young girl being treated for malaria at the Clinic.
Photo © Eli Reichman, 2019

The new year has had a number of very exciting developments. In January, Dr. Heather Demirci, a doctor of physical therapy worked with Soft Power Health's physical therapists Stephen, Flavia and Rachel seeing patients and teaching them new diagnostic and treatment skills. Dr. Heather's training in Functional Manual Physical Therapy means that her hands work miracles on patients. Her sharing of knowledge with SPH's therapists also ensures patients get better care. Patients were seen at the clinic as well as in outreach and both the patients and our team of physical therapists benefitted. From the moment she arrived until her taxi took her back to the airport, Dr. Heather was busy teaching and treating patients! She even managed to squeeze in a continuing medical education (CME) class for all staff on how this type of physical therapy works and its benefits. At the CME, Porciano, one of our laboratory technicians who has a back problem, volunteered to be worked on. Needless to say, all the staff were impressed and curious. The next day, Dr. Heather had a line out the door of staff members who wanted her help! Along with the trainings and teachings, Dr. Heather donated much needed physiotherapy tools, including a PT table that will allow patients to be worked on more easily. She also promised to come back to Soft Power Health in the future, which is terrific! Learning opportunities like this are wonderful, as they help the staff continue to expand their own knowledge and to feel inspired, thereby helping our patients receive better care.



Kirsten and Steve Boda on
a community visit.

The second big news for January is that our new country manager, Kirsten Bunkeddeko, started her tenure with us. Kirsten brings lots of practical and useful experience working in Uganda and Africa to her new role. She began as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Zambia, where she worked in a rural clinic. After completing the Peace Corps, Kirsten came to Uganda, where she worked for a ladies microfinance cooperative in Sironko district. Since her arrival at Soft Power Health in January, Kirsten has jumped right in, and has been busy doing a great job as country manager! There are many moving parts to our organization and Kirsten has learned and adapted to all very well. She has also brought her own innovative ideas to help improve things. We are thrilled to have Kirsten join our family.

Our third big event, which is equally thrilling, has been the hiring of Mercy, our new in-house accountant. As there have been so many daily activities going on both in the Clinic and in outreach, the time had come to hire a full time person to help manage the day-to-day finances. Mercy came highly recommended and has been a wonderful addition to the SPH family!

Last but not least, Dr. Stella graduated from her residency program and is now a full-fledged cardiologist in Uganda—one of only a few. Dr. Stella has begun working with us seeing cardiac patients at the clinic on Wednesdays. This is great news for our patients as high blood pressure is the number one disease we are treating.



Dr. Stella does an EKG for a new patient.

The Allan Stone Community Health Clinic:

From January through March 2019, the Clinic saw a total of 10,434 patients (30% returning and 70% new attendees.) This has been our busiest quarter to date. During this quarter, Soft Power Health also referred 228 patients on for surgeries, advanced testing, or chemotherapy in the Kampala-Entebbe area. A large number of malaria cases were treated at the clinic bumping it back to the fifth most commonly treated disease at the Clinic and Hypertension (i.e., high blood pressure) remained our most commonly treated disease.

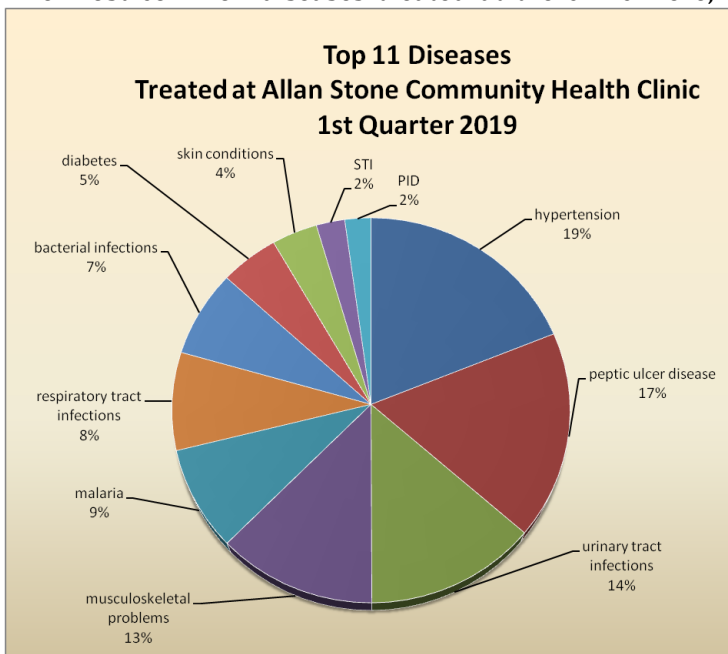
Our patients continue to avail themselves of the great dental care offered by our dentist, Dr. Paul, both at the Clinic and in outreach. This quarter, Dr. Paul treated 103 people for dental problems and referred 4 people on for more complex treatment. Periodontal diseases (56), and extractions (31) remain the most commonly treated complaints.

This quarter saw a large increase in the number of physical therapy patients treated by Stephen Kato and Flavia. In the 4th quarter of 2018, 756 patients were treated, but between January and March of 2019, our physical therapy team saw 956 patients. This can be attributed to the fact that it was “festive season” in the previous quarter, so the clinic was closed for the Christmas holiday. The most common conditions treated were lower back pain, such as lumbar spondylosis, and sciatica (267), followed by cerebral palsy (168), and lower limb pain (134). Lower back pain remains the most common condition seen in adults, and cerebral palsy the most common among children. Although the majority of PT patients were seen at the Clinic this quarter, 53 of the total were treated via Stephen’s community outreach program in Lukolo village. Those 53 patients are among those most in need and cannot afford transport to the clinic but need regular therapy.

Our ultrasound machine continues to be put to great use here at the Clinic! In the 1st quarter of 2019 we provided 168 scans to 168 of our patients. A large number of our patients are pregnant women who come for prenatal ultrasounds to confirm how far along the pregnancy is and to make sure the baby looks in good condition. Thus, we expect and hope for these scans to show normal results. Of the total ultrasounds, 59 scans resulted in a normal diagnosis, and 109 revealed an abnormality that required further treatment.

Top 11 conditions this quarter:

The most common diseases treated at the clinic were, in descending order: hypertension, (1747); peptic ulcer disease, (1604); urinary tract infections, (1251); musculoskeletal problems, (1159); malaria, including 7 cases of malaria in pregnancy, (797); respiratory tract infections, including 30 cases of pneumonia, (759); bacterial infections, (676); diabetes, (450); skin conditions (352); sexually transmitted infections (220); and pelvic inflammatory disease, (201).



Mother and Child Wellness Center:

Between January and March, the triage team counseled 1248 individual pediatric patients and their families about nutrition and malnutrition, including the causes of malnutrition. 224 of these patients required the intervention of High Energy Milk (HEM). In some instances, the patient’s malnutrition was severe and required several courses of HEM. Of the children who received HEM treatment, 71 had cerebral palsy (CP), which virtually guarantees they will be malnourished, as CP affects motor skills

(including the muscles and movements involved in chewing and swallowing or eating independently). Children with this condition may also have gastrointestinal problems that can affect how well they are able to absorb nutrients. Additionally, 179 rounds of vaccinations were administered this quarter.

Despite the ongoing shortage of family planning supplies in Uganda, Soft Power Health's family planning teams at the Clinic and in the field were still able to obtain and administer family planning to those women who wanted it. This is a small miracle, as acquiring what limited supplies there are has not been easy! At the Mother and Child Wellness Center, 230 women received intermediate term and long term family planning methods: 108 three-month courses of Depo-Provera injectable birth control were administered and 34 three-month packages of birth control pills were distributed to women who chose these forms of family planning. 87 long-term implants were placed and 27 were removed. One IUD was placed and 576 male condoms were also distributed.



Dr. Milly with community patient family from Super Hole Village.

During this quarter, 4,209 people were tested for HIV, with only 92 positive results. This represents an extremely low 2% positivity rate. 60 pregnancy tests were taken, and 1 was positive. At the Mother and Child Wellness Center this quarter, 2 women requested counseling about birth control side effects.

Finally, during our first quarter Marie Stopes collaborative family planning day, 5 women chose tubal ligations and no men chose vasectomies as permanent forms of birth control. 26 women chose long-term birth control implants. 1 IUDs was inserted and none were removed. 26 women were tested for HIV and one was positive.

Nutrition/Malnutrition Outreach

This quarter, 379 people participated in 11 malnutrition education outreaches in 11 villages in Butagaya and Busedde sub-counties in our home district of Jinja. Also, we made follow up visits to 79 former participants' homes to see the education program's impact and to determine whether people had retained and were making use of the knowledge from the education sessions. At these outreaches, we were also able to distribute 1,170 doses of Albendazole, 581 courses of Vitamin A, and 2,610 courses of prenatal vitamins to pregnant and lactating women. This remains possible due to Vitamin Angels' donations. The impact of the malnutrition outreaches is far greater than the attendance numbers indicate, because often whole families come to the outreaches and only one member is registered in the attendance book. Many children receive the education in addition to the deworming with Albendazole and the treatment with vitamin A. The "soft power" of this educational outreach has been critically important for helping people live healthier lives.

Malaria Prevention and Outreach:



Catherine at home with her mosquito net.

Between January and March, between the Clinic and our malaria education outreaches, we sold 300 nets. Specifically, 38 nets were sold during educational outreach sessions while 262 nets were sold at the Clinic. However, even as net purchases remain low, the demand for education is holding steady. In the 1st quarter, 713 people attended our malaria outreach education sessions. In addition, the malaria outreach team made 39 follow-up visits in 9 villages to evaluate whether previously purchased nets from education sessions were being used correctly and whether people reported having less malaria. We continue to see how important this education and prevention methodology is. This quarter malaria treatment rates rose at the Clinic. While overall they are much lower than they were when we started, we also realize that without vigilant monitoring and continued education and prevention methods available to all who

need it, malaria will come roaring back to be a bigger problem in Uganda.

DIG Garden

This quarter the Soft Power Health DIG garden produced a bounty of pumpkin, matoke, kale, eggplant, cabbage, pineapple, and spinach. The majority of the crop was used in the kitchen and for staff, but there was a surplus of pumpkin available to sell. Every bit of extra income generation helps, so this is more good news!

In addition, as of this quarter, there are a total of 41 ongoing local gardens thanks to DIG! As Uganda has two growing seasons, February is one of the times during the year that the DIG team distributes seeds. Patrick and his team provided seeds to the current group of 41 gardeners. As soon as the rains arrive, the planting begins. As the seasons have shifted a bit, this once-predictable occurrence has radically changed. The DIG teams and gardeners have to adapt in order to make the gardens productive and so far so good. The families in these communities are learning to grow healthy, nutritious food to feed themselves, as well as to have some surplus to sell.

Family Planning Outreach:

This quarter, 1,103 women received intermediate and long-term family planning through family planning outreaches in 38 villages. During these family planning outreach sessions, 832 women chose three-month birth control injections for intermediate-term family planning and 166 women chose birth control pills. 105 new long-term contraceptive implants were placed and no IUDs were placed or removed. 349 women requested and received pregnancy tests. 11 of these tests were positive. No women requested or received counseling about side effects of birth control. 2,261 male condoms and 14 female condoms were distributed at the family planning outreach sessions. We also gave 4,780 doses of Albendazole, a deworming treatment, to children in the field. This deworming treatment is effective for 6 months, improving those children's cognitive development as well as their chances of gaining weight and being healthier. Despite severe supply shortages, family planning is still happening!



Ladies waiting for family planning at an outreach in Bwenda.

Domestic Violence Counseling

This quarter, between outreaches and Clinic consultations, 225 people accessed Soft Power Health's domestic violence counseling services. These services consist of sensitization sessions at Family Planning outreaches, follow-up home visits, and consultations at the Clinic. Florence, SPH's domestic violence counselor met with 178 people this quarter and followed up with 47 people with home visits to assist them in implementing what they had learned during their earlier counseling sessions. Often people require more than two visits to help solve their problems. The most frequently reported domestic violence issue this quarter was emotional violence (120 instances), followed by economic violence (93 instances), and sexual violence (12 instances).

Thank you so much for your help making Soft Power Health's work possible. We really appreciate it!

To learn more about the services we provide and the costs involved, or to make a one-time or monthly donation, please click [here](#) or go to www.softpowerhealth.org/donate.php.