

Soft Power Health

2nd Quarter Update
2019

What's New:

From February to May 2019, Soft Power Health hosted Gen, a Masters of Public Health student from McGill University in Canada. Gen wished to learn about all of Soft Power Health's programming, but took a special interest in our family planning outreach. She spent the majority of her time accompanying the three family planning teams into the field on their weekly educational outreaches and implementations in order to observe how they worked and to determine whether we could make any improvements. Not surprisingly, Gen saw first-hand how needed basic education about conception and contraception is for many people. It may be hard to believe, but the reality in Uganda is that many simply don't have access to this information. Gen's experience and feedback highlighted the importance of the family planning education to all attendees and participants at our outreach sessions. In most instances, Ugandans do not have access to this fundamental and essential education. Many outreach attendees are hearing the information for the first time. Gen's feedback is very helpful for maintaining high quality programming at Soft Power Health. Thank you Gen!



Flavia consults with the mother of a young physical therapy patient with cerebral palsy. Photo © 2019, Eli Reichman

During the second quarter, thanks to a donation from the Mirja Sachs Foundation, Soft Power Health was able to begin refurbishing and expanding our existing physical therapy treatment space. The demand for physical therapy had been increasing steadily over the last year and space was quickly becoming an issue. Physical therapy remains a completely underserved area of medicine, even in the larger context of generally underserved medical needs in Uganda. Many of the long-term PT patients have disabilities, and they are heavily discriminated against in Ugandan society, especially in rural communities where education rates are low. Expanding the space to work with patients, and adding some very helpful tools, will improve care and make vast improvements in these patients' lives. We are incredibly grateful for this donation.



Masters of Public Health student, Gen, making a home visit during outreach.

Another development in the second quarter was the raising of our Clinic fees. We had not raised the cost for our services since 2015 so it was high time to do so. At the current exchange rate, our new fee of 15,000 UGX is approximately \$4.00 USD, less than the cost of a cappuccino at most coffee shops in the US. We always carefully consider raising fees, as we do not want the poorest of the poor to miss out on our services; however, our fees were increased in April and, as of now, the Clinic numbers are holding strong with an average of 120 patients per day!

In less positive news, as had been speculated, the ongoing impacts of Isimba Dam and the flooding of the Kalagala Offset Area are being felt in our patient population. One of the unintended consequences of the construction of the mega hydro-electric dam is an increase in rates of malaria. Since Isimba was completed in November 2018, we have seen a noticeable spike in the cases of malaria treated at the Clinic. In the quarters prior to Isimba's completion, malaria had dropped to the 7th, and even 8th, most common disease treated. In only the first six months of 2019, malaria has crept back up into 4th place! Isimba's reservoir has created ample breeding grounds for Anopheles mosquitoes, the females of which are the vector for malaria. These effects are being felt and seen among our patients. It is a good thing our malaria education and prevention program can provide people with education about malaria transmission and prevention and with the opportunity to purchase subsidized mosquito nets!

Finally, on a happier note, photographer and documentarian, Eli Reichman returned to Uganda to photograph the impacts of the flooding of the Kalagala Offset Area and to document Soft Power Health's work. We are very lucky to be working with Eli! His talent certainly speaks for itself. Eli will be creating a new website for us as well, so stay tuned for its upcoming launch.

The Allan Stone Community Health Clinic:

From April through June 2019, the Clinic saw a total of 7,904 patients, and a total of 8,647 diagnoses were made and treated. The reason for this discrepancy is that a number of patients present with more than one health problem. Also, during this quarter, Soft Power Health referred 174 patients for surgeries, advanced testing, or chemotherapy in the Kampala-Entebbe area. Although hypertension (i.e., high blood pressure) remains our most commonly treated disease, the cases of malaria treated at the Clinic have markedly increased since the beginning of 2019. Malaria is now back to the fourth most commonly treated disease.

Dr. Paul, Soft Power Health's dentist, saw 96 dental patients this quarter. The top 2 diagnoses by far were periodontal disease and extractions, followed far behind by the need for fillings and dental abscesses. This continues to highlight the basic need for preventative dental education as well as access to tooth brushes and toothpaste! Most people in rural Uganda do not have contact with either!

The 2nd quarter of 2019 saw another increase in the number of physical therapy patients treated by Stephen Kato, Rachel, and Flavia. Between April and June 2019, 865 patients were treated. The most commonly treated condition was cerebral palsy (209) followed closely by lower back pain, such as lumbar spondylosis, and sciatica (201 in total), and lower limb pain (110). 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, 84 of the total were treated via Stephen's community outreach program in Lukolo village. The outreach program remains the very best way to reach patients who are not able to travel to the Clinic. Many of these patients are bed bound or too poor to afford transport.

The ultrasound machine continues to be put to great use at the Clinic! In the 2nd quarter of 2019, we provided scans to 110 of our patients. 69 were women, 37 were men and 4 were children. 53 abdominal ultra sounds were performed as well as 43 pelvic scans, 7 obstetric scans and 6 other various scans. 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, 55 scans were normal, and 55 revealed an abnormality that required further investigation and treatment.

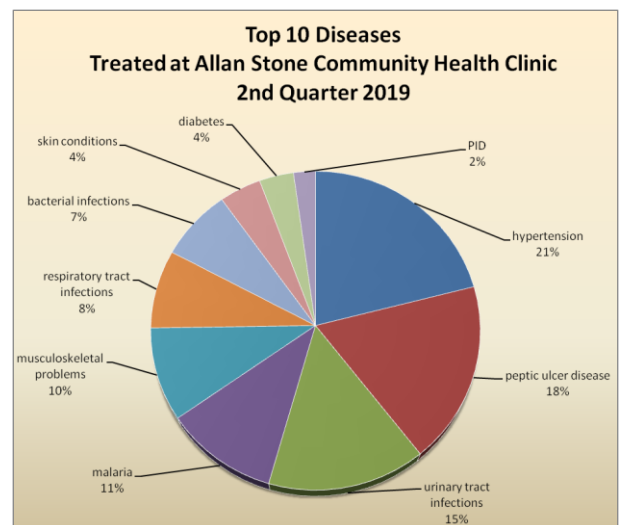
Top 10 Diseases Treated this quarter:

The most common diseases treated at the Clinic were, in descending order: hypertension, (1766); peptic ulcer disease, (1537); urinary tract infections, (1265); malaria, including 7 cases of malaria in pregnancy, (913); musculoskeletal problems, (791); respiratory tract infections, including 19 cases of pneumonia, (669); bacterial infections, (617); skin conditions (355); diabetes, (291); pelvic inflammatory disease, (186).

Notably, this quarter, 55 cases of tuberculosis were diagnosed and 42 people were diagnosed with HIV. It appears that malaria and TB are on the rise in our area, while HIV is on the decline. The good news is that neither HIV nor TB has reached the top 10 diseases seen and treated at the Clinic.

Mother and Child Wellness Center:

Between April and June, 591 treatments of high energy milk were prescribed for severely malnourished patients. In some instances, the patient's malnutrition was severe enough to require several courses of HEM. Of the



recipients, 392 were sick, malnourished children, and 199 were children and adults with cerebral palsy. In addition, 357 rounds of vaccinations were administered this quarter.

At the Mother and Child Wellness Center, 185 women received intermediate term and long term family planning methods: 117 three-month courses of Depo-Provera injectable birth control were administered and 10 three-month packages of birth control pills were distributed to women who chose these forms of family planning. 30 long-term implants were placed and 13 were removed. 9 IUDs were placed and 1,001 male condoms were also distributed. Between the Mother and Child Wellness Center and outreach, 1,538 women received intermediate and long term family planning. With the ongoing countrywide shortages of family planning supplies, these are fabulous achievements by the family planning teams.



A young child receiving vitamin A supplementation after a malnutrition outreach session. Photo © 2019, Eli Reichman

Nutrition/Malnutrition Outreach

Between April and June, 343 people participated in malnutrition education outreaches in 12 villages in our home district of Jinja. Also, follow up visits were made to 127 former participants' homes in 10 villages to assess knowledge retention and implementation at the home level. At these outreaches, we were also able to distribute 1,113 doses of Albendazole and 330 courses of Vitamin A to children in need, and 4,530 courses of prenatal vitamins to pregnant and lactating women. Thank you to Vitamin Angels for their ongoing donations of vitamins and deworming treatments. 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:



A young community patient shows off his bed and correctly-hung mosquito net, during a follow-up visit.

This quarter, 590 people in 26 villages in 11 sub-counties in 3 districts attended our malaria outreach education sessions. In addition, between the Clinic and our malaria education outreaches, we sold 606 nets. Specifically, 107 nets were sold during educational outreach sessions while 499 nets were sold at the Clinic. The malaria outreach team made 45 follow-up visits in 11 villages in Jinja, Mayuga, Iganga, and Kayunga districts to evaluate whether previously purchased nets from education sessions were being used correctly and whether people reported having less malaria. It is a sad fact that this quarter malaria treatment rates rose again at the Clinic. Without vigilant monitoring and making education and prevention methods available to all who need it, it is possible that malaria will come roaring back to be a bigger problem in Uganda. This is especially true in our area and in large part may be due to Isimba dam.

DIG Garden

The DIG demonstration garden at the Clinic was very productive this quarter. It produced 12 bunches of matoke, 8 heads of cabbage, 26 bundles of spinach, 44 bundles of kale, 26 mangoes, 38 kilograms of eggplants, 5 giant jack fruits, 10 cassava plants with roots, and 2 kilograms of bitter berries!

The first season of community gardens has come to an end, and 29 of the 32 community farmers have graduated. The major crops planted included: kale, beans, cabbage, maize, cassava, potatoes, bananas, and yams. The beans and soya didn't do as well as expected because erratic rain affected the planting at the start of the season. However, kale is the main cash crop, from which most of the farmers get income, and its success this season has made a positive change to the wellbeing of these families.

A new DIG outreach schedule will start at the beginning of August 2019 and will continue until the beginning of February 2020. This outreach will include 30 new gardens! The crops planned include maize, beans, peanuts, and kale. In addition, food security/community contributions members will contribute cassava stems, potato vines, banana suckers, and yams.



A woman reads a condom packet during a family planning outreach session. Photo © 2019, Eli Reichman

Family Planning Outreach:

This quarter, 1,353 women received intermediate and long-term family planning through family planning outreaches in 38 villages. During these family planning outreach sessions, 925 women chose three-month birth control injections for intermediate-term family planning and 72 women chose birth control pills. 17 new long-term contraceptive implants were placed and 4 were removed. No IUDs were placed or removed. 333 women requested and received pregnancy tests. 14 of these tests were positive. One woman received counseling about side effects of birth control. 2657 male condoms were distributed at the family planning outreach sessions. We also gave 3,887 doses of Albendazole for de-worming to people in need, the majority being children. Albendazole treats hookworm infection which is a significant contributor to anemia and malnutrition in Uganda, and is omnipresent in people who don't wear shoes. This is true of the majority of children, and many adults, in our area. One Albendazole tablet will keep a person hookworm free for 6 months, and it is thanks to Vitamin Angels we can provide this service! This quarter, during the family planning outreaches, over 5,000 people benefitted from Soft Power Health's work.

Domestic Violence Counseling

This quarter, at outreaches and the Clinic, 274 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. The most frequently reported domestic violence issue this quarter was emotional violence (139 instances), followed by economic violence (116 instances), and sexual violence (13 instances). There were only three reported cases of physical violence. Often people coming for counseling experience more than one type of violence. Notably, 211 women were counseled and 63 men were counseled as well. This service has been extremely beneficial to patients who are really suffering and believed that assistance was not possible. Florence has helped many people know their rights and counseled them to help create better life situations for themselves. Well done Florence!



Another busy day for Eli Reichman in Uganda as he photographs a patient and her baby.

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](https://www.softpowerhealth.org/donate.php) or go to www.softpowerhealth.org/donate.php.