



Horn of Africa Neonatal Development Service

June 2018

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Horn of Africa Neonatal Development Services (HANDS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving infants' lives in Ethiopia by facilitating the implementation of skilled medical care by the local medical professionals.

HANDS Team 2017 Annual Report

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In 2017, HAND members and volunteers made two trips to Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. Each traveling team included a neonatologist, neonatal nurse and neonatal respiratory therapist.

During these trips, experiences were exchanged with special emphases on infection prevention, nutrition and fluid management, respiratory support, monitoring sick babies and proper neonatal documentation.

A landmark achievement was the introduction of intravenous fluid pumps that deliver IV fluid in the most accurate way. The nursing staff at Felege Hiwot Memorial Hospital (FHMH) NICU was very quick to learn how to operate these IV pumps.

The traveling team delivered neonatal equipment that were desperately needed. Total equipment delivered to FHMH NICU was worth close to \$100,000 USD. The Boeing Company facilitated the shipment in collaboration with Ethiopian Airlines. HANDS would like to express its gratitude for the generosity and support.

During the April 2017 to Bahir Dar, the HANDS team made a short visit to Gondar University College of Medicine and Health Science. The team was impressed by what they observed in the NICU.

The HANDS team also had very productive meetings with Ethiopian health professionals in Bahir Dar University (BDU) and FHMH, including senior doctors, residents, nurses and administrators on separate occasions. They discussed pertinent issues involving the care of newborns and the responsibilities of the local health professionals in maintaining the upgraded status of the Neonatal ICU.

“The Legacies we leave behind define our success in life” ~ MWS.

HANDS made a successful Trip to Bahir Dar in April 2018

HANDS team, Dr. Mesfin Woldesenbet (Neonatologist and founder of HANDS), Eskedar Getahun (Respiratory Therapist at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, Rockville, Maryland), Andrea Beckman (Neonatal registered nurse at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital Rockville, Maryland), and Dr. Marc DiFazio (Pediatrics Neurologist at Children's National Medical Center-CNMC, Washington DC) traveled to Bahir Dar on March 31, 2018 and stayed through April 15, 2018.

During this period, previously exchanged experiences were reinforced and great deal of new approaches to neonatal problems were shared. In addition, approximately \$20,000 USD worth of vital neonatal equipment was donated. Below are highlights of HADS team;

1. Blood collecting test tubes specially made for newborns were introduced, thus preventing the previously practice of drawing unnecessary large amount of blood from the small babies.
2. Phototherapy units were donated and utilized during this time.
3. Dr. DiFazio introduced the concept of "Therapeutic Hypothermia", which is the standard practice in western NICU's, on babies suffering from lack of oxygen during delivery. This problem is one of the top 3 major neonatal issues causing death and disability in Ethiopia.
4. For the first time in FHMH/BDU history, a pediatrics senior resident was able to put a breathing tube into a baby that was not breathing and was about to die. This intervention was done under the supervision of Dr. Mesfin.
5. The concept of potential collaboration between CNMC and BDU is initiated. Dr. DiFazio is going to oversee the process.
6. The HANDS team reopened a preterm room, which was previously used as storage room. The team painted the walls and cleaned the incubators, and four preterm infants were transferred to the refurbished room.
7. Neonatal resuscitation courses were given to the nursing staff, interns and residents of BDU/FHMH
8. After completing significant neonatal competencies training, the nursing staff of FHMH NICU were awarded certificate.
9. HANDS team met with DBU/FHMH senior medical staffs, pediatrics residents and nursing staff on separate occasions and discussed the progresses that were made and the challenges faced. Summary of the discussions was communicated to the Hospital Leadership team.

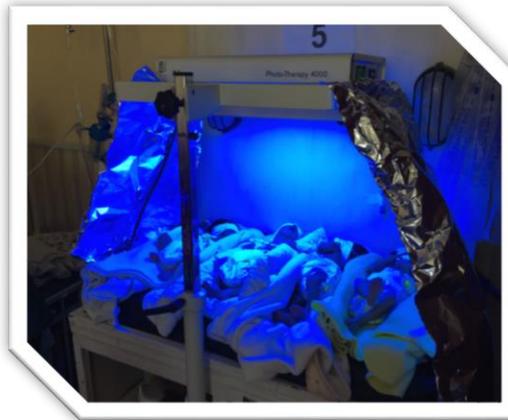
HANDS would like to express its gratitude to the medical, nursing and administrative staff of BDU and FHMH for their hospitality and willingness to exchange experiences. We also would like to thank our volunteers, Andrea Beckman who traveled for the second time with the team and Eskedar Getahun, who is originally from Ethiopia, for being an interpreter in addition to sharing her expertise. Our deepest gratitude to Dr. Marc DiFazio for sharing his experiences in the NICU, pediatrics ICU, out-patient clinics and pediatrics floor.



April 2018: HANDS team members, Eskedar and Andrea, donating vital neonatal equipment to Felege Hiwot Hospital NICU staff



April 2018: Dr. DiFazio and Dr. Mesfin during bedside rounds sharing experiences with pediatrics residents, interns and nursing staff



April 2018: Felege Hiwot Hospital NICU Recently donated phototherapy unit being used on multiple patients

Over the last 3 years, several teams and volunteers have visited Felege Hiwot Memorial Hospital Neonatal ICU. Significant improvement has been observed during this period. The nursing staff and pediatrics residents are more comfortable to manage sick newborns. HANDS proudly report that the short-term goal has been achieved at Felege Hiwot Memorial Hospital and Bahir Dar University.

We are confident that the staff and administration of Bahir Dar University and Felege Hiwot Hospital will continue to maintain the standard. HANDS continue its commitment to collaborate in the future.



April 2018: Felege Hiwot Hospital Nursing staff received "Neonatal Competency Certificate"

HANDS is Planning to Expand its Mission to Hawassa, Ethiopia

HANDS members and volunteers are planning to extend their experiences to Hawassa, a city located on the southern part of Ethiopia. Discussions between HANDS and Hawassa University College of Medicine and Health Sciences have already begun. HANDS team is planning to visit Hawassa in October 2018. While there is still a great deal to be done at the facilities HANDS worked in the past 7 years, we believe our short-term goals have been achieved. As we continue to expand our mission, we believe that the experiences HANDS team gained from previous visits will enable the team to implement the short-term goals in a more expedited time frame.

2017 Year-End Fundraising Campaign

During the 2017 year-end fundraising campaign, HANDS received funds to support two medical team trips in 2018. HANDS would like to thank all supporters in helping us achieve our goals and we hope your support will continue.

Please visit our website www.hadsforbabies.org to get more information on how to support our mission.

Next Steps

We believe strongly that the involvement of multiple organizations comprised of a variety of specialties or professions, both medical and non-medical, are needed to address these issues. This will require the involvement of local Ethiopian professionals and orchestration by the Ethiopian Ministry of Health.

We are in dire need of neonatologists to lead teams and are willing to travel to Ethiopia. A team comprises of a neonatologists, neonatal nurse and respiratory therapist.

We hope this newsletter will trigger thought and discussion among individuals and organizations residing in the developed countries. We are willing to work with local Ethiopian professionals towards a common goal of upgrading neonatal care in Ethiopia through the exchange of combined knowledge and experiences.

- HANDS Team

How You Can Help

Would you like to get involved with HANDS by volunteering your time and talents?

We have volunteer opportunities for skilled, talented and dedicated people in the following areas:

Clinical Staff

- Neonatologist
- Neonatal Nurses
- Neonatal Respiratory Therapists
- Pharmacists

Non-Clinical Staff

- Administrative Assistance
- Engineers
- Fundraising
- IT
- Legal
- Marketing
- Shipment
- Travel Arrangements
- Website Maintenance

We welcome monetary donations in any amount. Your contributions will enable us to continue our work to improve neonatal health care facilities and the delivery of medical care to newborn babies in Ethiopia.

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