

African Mission Covid 19 Appeal

At this very moment with every news bulletin update we are now seeing what this Covid-19 virus pandemic is doing to our lives here in the UK. Even with all the advantages of modern medicine and with our National Health Service we are struggling to save lives. By international standards Europe is many more times ahead of Africa in terms of resources and trained health workers. What will happen when this virus begins to spread in Africa? All the predictions indicate that many lives will be lost in African countries.



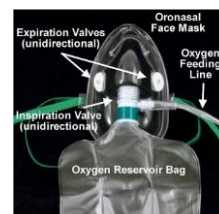
St.Mary's Hospital Lacor Gulu Uganda where I have been involved since 2002 is well placed to offer some hope. The most important therapy for this virus pneumonia is oxygen. About two years ago the hospital set up a central oxygen plant so that oxygen is now more available to



more patients in greater quantities. As I write more preparations are being made to expand oxygen supplies and African Mission is doing its best to support the intensive care unit and the engineers working on oxygen concentrators supplementing the oxygen supply. Over several years we have trained and distributed many finger pulse oximeters (photo on left) which allow our nurses to identify and then treat patients with low oxygen

levels in the blood. These oximeters cost about £10. Most importantly they will enable our nurses to identify those patients who no longer need oxygen so that oxygen can be reserved and not wasted.

We have sent specialised oxygen masks (photo on right) which will enable the staff to deliver high oxygen concentrations to very sick patients with pneumonia. A box of these masks cost about £50.



We have sent an oxygen sensor to our engineer so that he can better fix any broken oxygen concentrators to supplement our central supply of oxygen. An oxygen



sensor costs about £50 and we would like to send another to build up capacity. We have sent six infrared thermometers to identify vulnerable patients without the need for touching. A good quality thermometer is about £40. We have also last month sent to our neonatal unit one CPAP machine to improve the supply of oxygen to small babies. This was sent before the impact of Covid-19 had been realised as part of our overall continual support for the neonatal unit over the years.

There are other items we are still trying to obtain for the intensive care unit but in the UK now some items are in short supply as the NHS here also struggles. We are in constant contact with colleagues in Uganda to be sensitive to how we may yet support St.Mary's Hospital.

Thank you for all you have done in the past and please do not forget Africa who at this moment await the Covid-19 pandemic in all its ferocity. African Mission is still functioning and alert to the needs of Africa. The sick poor in Africa need your prayers and whatever you can give in the way of practical help.

Many thanks,
Dr.Raymond Towey
Anaesthetist
21 April 2020

