

Health and Welfare  
John Myers, 2002

**Health and Welfare** I lump health and welfare together with some hesitation. In former times, OWL had a health sub-group. Marion is the only remaining member. We really need to recruit at least one more person in this area. John Fisher has participated in training of health workers. Whilst in Bo, I visited the Hospital, visited Planned Parenthood Association of SL (where Joe Kobbah is manager), had contact with Wusu Sannoh who is Chair of Bo Red Cross, and briefly met Teresa Bangali's sister who is a public health nurse going out to the villages. I visited the St Mary's Children's Centre, and had brief contact with the Cheshire Home. The Regional Minister South was a medical doctor who was involved with the link in its early days when he worked at Bo Hospital. He told me the hospital link had been very helpful and would like to see it carry on.

At Bo Hospital (occupancy 450), I was greeted by the matron and taken round by Dr Andrew T Muana a general physician with responsibilities for cardio-pulmonary and TB who is also Chair of the drugs committee. He is also a Rotarian. I think he would be the likely contact for a link at the hospital. I think inter-professional contact would be appreciated for its own sake, and copies of professional journals and any other literature would be most welcome. There is a lack of simple equipment like bandages, thermometers, stethoscopes through to things like an electrocardiogram and an suction machine. In theory there is not a shortage of basic drugs but irregular issue from a national central medical store and the increased demand from an increasing population and the proximity of two refugee camps means that there is at times. More specialised drugs are too expensive, for example they cannot get hold of cyclophosphamide to treat bucket tumours in children. Some services barely exist, there is one dentist and one dental nurse for the whole of the southern region.

I visited the grave of Mike Downham in the hospital grounds. The Research Centre has not shut down but is marking time pending the appointment of a new director.

I did not visit the Red Cross; but Wusu Sannoh has written a letter to the Chairman of the Leamington Branch; and I have made an appointment to deliver it on the 31<sup>st</sup> January. When Joe Kobbah visited Leamington he brought a list of his staff who would like pen friendships. He also visited the Family Planning Service in Brunswick Street. A Leamington Social Worker started to correspond but dropped out due to ill health. The Family Planning connection has not progressed. The only positive thing so far is that James Rogers 5 Gloucester Crescent Delapre Northampton NN4 8PP Email: kpakamoi2002@yahoo.co.uk the sister of Emma Rogers who works at PPSL has now expressed an interest in supporting us - he is a past chair of Northampton REC.

Regarding St Mary's Children Centre. The OWL link has been beneficial to this good cause. Equally Fr. Peter Konteh has been very helpful to us. This is a valued relationship; but there is no specific link between the centre and a similar organisation here. There is another focus of support for St Mary's via Sue Kirby, so perhaps there is not a pressing need. However if we come across anyone in the child care field who is interested there would be scope for some kind of link.

I had an abortive "cold call" visit to the Cheshire Home; but Teddy Mbayo and Aprilos Damba (Secretary to the Management Committee and tireless worker) caught up with me. They would really like to have a link. Teddy expects to be in UK again in June. I was staying across the road from them at the end of Ramadan. As I understand it the residents organised a youth then an adult disco which lasted till the early hours. Should we approach the Council of the Disabled re possible linking; maybe Teddy could then visit Leamington to talk to any interested group.