

Scoping Visit for Health Branch of One World Link – November 2018

Helena White

Helena White, midwife, and Sarah Galloon, health visitor, made a short visit to Yemoh Town Community Health Centre in Bo with a view to developing a supporting friendship, continuing the ethos of One World Link.

Yemoh Town Community Health Centre was built to support the people of Yemoh Town and the surrounding areas - approximately 18,000 people and has recently been extended to offer a more comprehensive maternity service with new rooms for delivery and post natal care. There is also potential for a laboratory, enabling quicker diagnostics without need for patient transfer.

Lansana Deen is the senior Community Health Officer (CHO), a very friendly and dedicated man who provides good leadership and is very keen to nurture our friendship into a supportive and reciprocal relationship.

Yemoh Town Health Centre is the highest level Peripheral Health Unit in the Kakua Chiefdom, with a number of Community Health Posts (CHP) referring to it, and for which Mr Deen is responsible

There are 3 CHOs and 2 Maternal and Child Health Aides who provide ante-natal, labour and post-natal care - there are no midwives at the health centre. The majority of the staff are volunteers.

Ante-natal consultations are being encouraged in order to detect problems earlier and are around: 120-180/month – women are seen any day of the week so care is not missed for want of being free on a given day. There are 12-20 births per month; 18 due this month

The extension of free health care to more categories of the population means less income for the health unit; such income is used to fill gaps in medication and supplies (eg sutures for perineal repair) from Ministry of Health and Sanitation. This gap is filled in part by patients or even staff paying out of their own pocket.

There are also children's clinics held at the centre that are mainly for vaccinations but all sick children brought to the centre will be seen and referred on appropriately.

Looking into the future in regards to our Link I feel very positive. The team of staff at this unit are very engaging and very keen to learn as much as they can to improve services offered. The building itself is ready to be utilised as a centre able to serve a growing community with plenty of scope to sustain further children's clinics and inpatients when required. It has also been earmarked to become a centre for Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care which means further input from the Government. This is great news as it currently has no running water or electricity which is essential for any health facility. I believe that if we Link with Yemoh Town Health Centre and work with the great health team there we can make a tangible improvement to the health care offered to the people of the area.

For more information about One World Link see <http://oneworldlink.org.uk>