

Chair's Report Aidgambia TCHC

AGM January 9th 2024

In this Report I have tried to capture the highlights since the last AGM under a number of headings I have also included an item on 'Future Initiatives' [which may aid us in setting out priorities for 2024.](#)

Success of graduating Bendon Bursarians

Our very first Bursarian, Chernor J Jallow, [and Clinical Advisor to the Trustees \(CAT\)](#), has successfully applied for another bursary from *Aidgambia* and is currently in China on a two years state funded Masters programme of study. He is in regular contact and money was transferred at start of January 2024.

- Lamin Njies, our second Bursarian, and our other Clinical Advisor to the Trustees (CAT), has secured one of five positions at the newly established Cardiology Unit at Banjul Hospital. This was against fierce competition - 160 applicants! Lamin is in no doubt that his connection and work with *Aidgambia* strengthened his CV and application. Three of the Trustees had the opportunity to visit Lamin and his co-workers at the impressive newly equipped and refurbished Centre. It was so uplifting to see someone so proud of his situation and workplace. Lamin, with Chernor away in China, is the only CAT and is linking up with new and existing and launching new widening participation initiatives which are described later in this Report. He is also looking into starting Masters studies.

As mentioned in my last report to Trustees in November 2023 we are delighted that both Ebrima K Jallow and Karafa (Jassy) Marong have graduated and have taken up key posts in the Gambian health system.

New and current Bursarians

- In November we welcomed Binta S Colley as our tenth Gambian student to benefit from a Bendon Bursary.
- We presented two reconditioned laptops at the meeting to both Binta and Naffisatou along with their annual cash bursary.
- Three Trustees met with the current group and it was reassuring to have direct contact with all of our current Bursarians. Each, in turn, outlined their journey and challenges in pursuing their studies. It was also good to see the support they have been giving to Wider Participation activities.
- Two new applications are being processed – both female.
- We now have an Excel spreadsheet capturing all the details of all Bendon Bursary recipients initiated by Chernor our CAT and aided by the Secretary.

Youth Health Football Activity

- The Charity financed its second Youth Health Cup event involving the two football academies it supports viz AVIC Academy and Yarambamba Academy.
- The previous event was in March 2021.
- These events have been used to emphasise the importance of physical exercise and healthy habits among the young.
- Naffisatou one of our recent bursarians was in attendance. Our CAT Lamin organised the event and Nfamara Sanyang, currently in his 4th year of Doctor programme both spoke to the two squads of players in English. Then Bas Bessane, Director of AVIC Academy spoke in Wolof. As in 2021 the event was attended by local dignitaries who presented medals and the 2023 Youth Help Cup.

Widening Participation -WP

A new initiative under this broad WP umbrella this year has been the Health Fair at Yundun (near the airport). This was organised by Lamin in his capacity as Trusted of the Japalleh Foundation Charity. *Aidgambia* match funded the Fair which took place over a weekend in late October. Lamin wrote a report. The project aimed to bring health workers into the community and was well attended and supported by the community.

Trustee Activities

- Our Treasurer has continued to efficiently manage all financial aspects of our operation ensuring that Bursarians and Projects are promptly paid.
- In November three Trustees visited The Gambia. They met with current Bursarians and visited Banjul Hospital's Cardiology Unit.

They also met with CAT Lamin to discuss future projects and potential Bursarians.

Donations, Easy Fund Raising and support in kind

- Again we have benefited from hardware gifts from friends and family.
- Money raised has enabled the Charity to finance upgrades of hardware and distribute to the Bursarians. In total eleven students have received upgraded laptops.
- TK of Revive My Device, Brockley has proved invaluable in assessing hardware, cleaning and repairing and advising on upgrades.
- Easy Fund Raising (www.easyfundraising.org.uk) supporters (25 in total) continue to support via their on-line shopping. Long may that continue as we approach £1500 total.

Future Initiatives

- SUSTAINABILITY is the most important target for *Aidgambia* and it is clear from this Report that progress is being made supported in particular by our two CATs but also the Bursarians. This is progress.
- Two other areas are targeted for the following year which Trustees need to discuss and prioritise:
 - * OUR STORIES: This has been an idea for a couple of years now. We first discussed it at our meeting with the Bursary gathering in April 2022. The two CATs supported the idea of gathering the health-related stories of individuals to inspire the next generation and encourage their study and career aspirations. This could assist in outreach activity and also re-assure and inform our supporters. To date we have received 8 very different and interesting stories and now we need to finalise the best way forward. Jane Gay is actively pursuing production channels.
 - * THE WEBSITE: This has long been a weak area. Despite our best efforts our website is tired and out of date. However, 2024 starts on a brighter note after intervention and work by Nel Ta and Dan Simpson. Many thanks to them. The Secretary will outline the current state of play and gather views of the Trustees. 2024 could be the year a new approach to the website is finally launched.

2023 has been a good year for *aidgambiaTCHC* thanks to a concerted effort from CATs, Bursarians, Project Leaders, Trustees and all our supporters. Thank you to all.