

Mahboba's Promise opens Medical Centre

In April 2009 Mahboba's Promise realised a dream, to open a Medical Centre to provide medical and dental care and improve the standard of health and hygiene for Hope House orphans and widows, and the local community.

After a year of meticulous planning to assess Hope House's needs, recruit doctors and dentists and purchase necessary equipment and pharmaceutical supplies, Hope House Medical Centre opened its doors on April 4th.

"It was a very emotional time for all involved," says Mahboba. "The opening coincided with the monthly distribution of goods to the widows and attracted hundreds of women and children from the local community."

The original plan was to provide medical and dental care to the children of Hope House. However, when the local community found out about it, a line of women and children formed outside the clinic hoping to be treated.

"We could not turn them away," says Mahboba. "There is no other medical centre close to this area and the people have no money to pay for consultations and medicine."

"One woman could not walk and was diagnosed as anaemic, another woman had no teeth and many of the children were diagnosed with illnesses ranging from serious throat infections, scabies, fungal infections, hearing problems and Leishmania which is an infection caused from an insect bite and leads to their skin deteriorating if it is not treated with a daily injection," said Mahboba.

All the children examined by the dentist had a gum problem which has resulted in an increased demand for hygiene products, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and gum disease medication.

Three local doctors were involved with the planning of the clinic and the purchase of equipment and pharmaceutical supplies. Currently the clinic employs two General Practitioners, two Dentists, and one assistant. However, it is evident that the clinic needs to employ three women for hygiene work to assist the medical staff and work with the children to teach them basic hygiene principles.

Initially the doctors were to work three days a week. However, because of the huge demand for their services they have agreed to come 6 days a week after 1.00 pm without an increase in wages.

The Medical Centre would not have been possible without the generous support of Variety Club of Australia as well as many

individual Australians. Variety Club's support has guaranteed the success of the clinic in its first year of operation.

To continue this valuable, much needed work on-going funding is required to improve the service and to employ a qualified eye specialist. The services of an eye specialist were on the original wish list, but funding would not extend to this as the cost of equipment rose substantially from the original cost provided 12 months ago.

Mahboba would like to express her gratitude and thanks to Variety Club and the many individual supporters of Mahboba's Promise for helping with this project.

"I believe it is the first step in improving the standard of health and hygiene in Hope House and the immediate community," says Mahboba.