

Summer Newsletter 2019

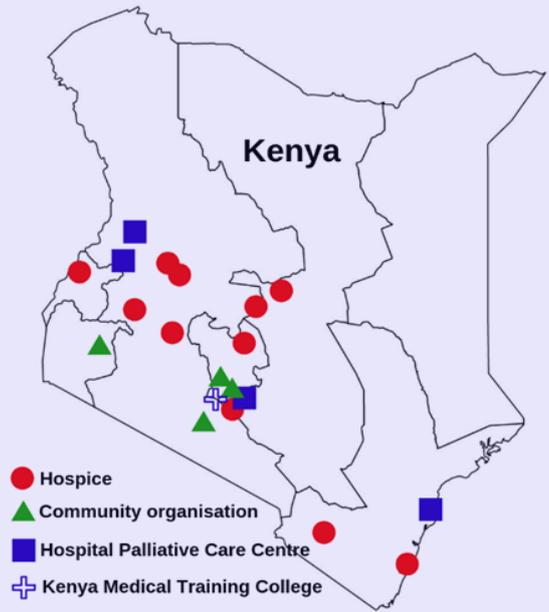


We have supported our Kenyan partner organisation Ongata Ngong Palliative Care Community, to train and mentor 45 Community Health Volunteers. These volunteers are now reaching patients in need of vital palliative care in isolated communities of southern Kenya for the first time.

The team from Meru Hospice in central Kenya has run awareness events to inform local communities about palliative care services and to increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of cancer. In Kenya over 70% of newly diagnosed cancers are already at the late stage. With these awareness events Meru Hospice is working hard to change this.



Welcome to our Summer Newsletter. This year we are helping to develop and deliver palliative care at 17 Hospices, Palliative Care Centres and training programmes, all thanks to your support. In this edition we will update you on just a few of the ways in which your donations have been put to good use.



News from Kenya



Congratulations to the latest group of community health volunteers trained by Nairobi Hospice. Each volunteer will work in their community providing home-based care for patients. They are the vital grass-roots link with the hospice which helps to raise awareness of life-limiting diseases, helping patients to access earlier diagnosis, treatment and care.

"I feel empowered by the knowledge gained and can understand the needs of patients better", Community Health Volunteer.

The team at Laikipia Palliative Care Centre have recently opened their new purpose-built hospice. This is an incredible achievement and the new facility will enable the team to provide palliative care to many more patients in need.

Executive Director of KEHPCA, Dr Zipporah Ali told us, *"It is such a beautiful place that will bring so much peace and joy to patients in that region. The dedication of the communities and the Palliative Care champions is totally amazing."*

We are currently supporting Laikipia Hospice to train community health volunteers who will raise awareness of cancer and refer potential patients to the new hospice.



Kenya's Palliative Care journey so far



Nairobi Hospice in 1992, the first hospice in Kenya

As a supporter of Hospice Care Kenya you may know that we were founded in 1991 to support the newly opened Nairobi Hospice. This was the first hospice in Kenya and represented the first step in making palliative care accessible to Kenyans.

Now, 28 years on, Nairobi Hospice is marking another major milestone. The team recently opened the doors to their new modern purpose-built hospice. With six treatment rooms and a large space in which to provide day-care peer-support sessions for patients and their families, the new hospice has the capacity to accept and treat many more patients.

The building has a large training room in which regular courses on palliative care will be held for health workers, to develop palliative care knowledge and skills within the health system. There is also a peaceful courtyard garden for patients.

The hospice is sited next to the Kenyatta National Hospital. The central location makes it more easily accessible to patients and will help the team to build a good working relationship with the hospital. The hospice team is even working towards becoming financially self-supporting by letting out the first floor rooms of the hospice as offices for doctors.



Top left: The new Nairobi Hospice building; **Top right:** The hospice staff team with volunteers and patients; **Below left:** A library and training room will enable the hospice to offer more courses in palliative care to enhance the skills of health workers; **Below centre:** The hospice has a large dedicated space for day-care sessions, where patients and their relatives can share experiences, receive support and learn about self-care topics; **Bottom right:** The hospice has six treatment rooms and now has the capacity to receive many more patients.



HCK Trustee Dr Mike Hughes, reflects on his experience of working at Nairobi Hospice...

Now and then. Then was 27 years ago when I arrived in Kenya to work as a doctor at Nairobi Hospice for the next four years. Now is my return visit this year to see the new hospice having been a consultant in a hospice in the UK for the last 22 years and a Trustee for Hospice Care Kenya.

How did it feel returning? It felt like going home, visiting old friends and back to where part of my heart belongs.

What has changed? When I left in 1996 there were just four hospices and now there are over 70 hospice and palliative care centres.

There is an exciting and vibrant palliative care community throughout Kenya transforming end-of-life care for patients across the whole country in a way I could have only dreamed of.

What hasn't changed? The desperate need for more care and resources; the inequality of health care; the passion and dedication of the hospice teams caring for patients; the shared humanity. The patients, their families and the individuals and communities helping to look after them remain an inspiration.



Left: Dr Mike Hughes with a patient at Nairobi Hospice in the early 1990s; **Centre:** With the hospice team; **Right:** Visiting the construction of the new Nairobi Hospice in 2018.

The development of palliative care in Kenya has come such a long way since Nairobi Hospice first opened its doors in 1990. There are now over 70 hospices and palliative care centres across Kenya; a remarkable achievement. However there remain many gaps which our work, with your support, continues to address.

Many hospices are small, poorly equipped and operate on very small budgets. We support Busia Hospice in western Kenya. The hospice operates out of a single room. It is run by a retired unsalaried nurse and her assistant, who take just a living allowance as their budget is so tight. They cover a huge catchment area yet they have no means of own transport and struggle to reach patients at home. They receive no government funds. There are many such hospice across Kenya.

By providing support where need is greatest we hope that more hospices across Kenya can transform and develop in the same way as Nairobi Hospice so that equal access to quality palliative care can be achieved across the country.

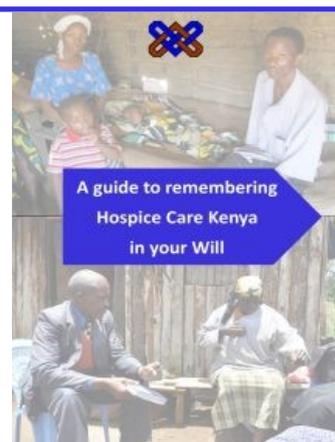
The dedicated support of our donors over many years has been a significant contribution to these achievements in palliative care development in Kenya. Gifts in wills help to support our work over the long-term, helping to bring about significant change and improvements.

Please consider leaving us a gift in your will, if you are able, after providing for family and loved ones.

If you would like to find out more please visit our website

<http://www.hospicecarekenya.com/legacy-giving/>

Or call us to discuss your decision on **01723 890283**



Thank you to all of our friends and supporters for your help and contributions. Your donations are our future and you are making a big difference in helping those who would otherwise suffer alone.



Pamela with her daughters outside their home

Pamela's story

Pamela first discovered a lump in her breast five years ago. With no money for transport or hospital costs she had to take out a loan of 20,000 KSH (around £150) to pay for medical care. She was diagnosed with stage 3-4 breast cancer and had surgery to remove the lump. In 2016 a blister appeared on her breast which developed into a painful wound. With no money, and still paying off the loan for her previous treatment, Pamela was unable to afford to see a doctor. Left untreated her wound grew larger and deeper, and didn't heal. During this time she suffered in pain, only able to buy occasional paracetamol when she could afford it. A friend put her in touch with a breast cancer survivor called Susan who knew that Busia Hospice could help. Susan told us about when she first met Pamela.

"Pamela already had stage 4 cancer. She had a very bad wound on her breast. I was shocked. I thought to myself, how am I going to help her? With the community we helped her raise money for treatment. Pamela had eight cycles of chemo but the money has ran out. She has had a rough journey. Her husband left her and her four children when he discovered she had cancer. I helped her reach out to Busia Hospice staff who are now taking care of her ."

Like Pamela, most people diagnosed with cancer in Kenya are already in the late stages. Whilst the health care system develops to improve access to cancer treatment, we are helping to fill the gap in palliative care provision so that people like Pamela do not have to live and die in pain and isolation. Nurses from Busia Hospice regularly visit Pamela. They helped care for her wound, and provide her with emotional support and pain relief, so she can continue caring for her children and home.

Please help us to help more people like Pamela. A regular gift would make a real difference to people living and dying with a terminal illness in Kenya. Thank you for your support.

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www.hospicecarekenya.com (Registered charity no. 1141469)