

NEWS - JANUARY 2018

REACHING THOSE MOST IN NEED

The reason why so many people in Kenya are needlessly blind is lack of access to affordable eye care. Kwale Eye Centre has been in existence for 25 years trying to combat this problem. We still need to go out into the community to find those who need us most, as often people would not come to the Eye Centre for an eye check.



We also have a number of satellite clinics - having more locations makes us more accessible! We carry out screening events in our clinics, spreading the word about our work and helping those people who present with eye problems.



Children are very enthusiastic volunteers for the Eye Centre! As part of our schools programme, we teach children how to check vision. They check every child in the school, and if anyone is found to have reduced vision, they get in touch with us! The photo to the right shows Saidi, our community based worker, teaching the children. He visits the school every month to check how they are doing.



FUNDRAISING IN SOUTHAMPTON!

On Tuesday 20th March, Salisbury Big Band will be hosting a fundraising concert at the Concorde Club, Eastleigh, UK. We hope our supporters local to the area will be able to join us for the evening. Please contact us for more information.



*An Evening of Swing
with the
Salisbury Big Band*

*Hosted by the
Concorde
Club and
featuring
singer
Elton Marie
Todd*

Tuesday
20th
March

Door 7pm

First song 8.00pm
Food and Drink
available

Concorde Club
Stoneham Lane
Eastleigh
SO50 9HQ
023 8061 3989

Tickets £10 - Profits to
Eyes for East Africa
RC1053222

NEWS - FEBRUARY 2018

VOLUNTEERS FROM THE UK

3 UK Ophthalmologists, Sarah Lucie Watson, Bruce James and Imran Yusuf, visit the Eye Centre for a week each year at their own expense. They get involved in everything from field work, to surgery, to policies, and most importantly training our students. We are very thankful that they donate their time and expertise!



Team training



Teaching surgery

NEW EQUIPMENT AT THE EYE CENTRE

Sarah Lucie Watson and her team previously donated a fundus camera to the Eye Centre. This camera can take a photo of the back of the eye and is useful in so many ways! It allows medics at the Eye Centre to monitor eye diseases closely. It allows us to explain to a patient what we are looking at. We can also send the images to specialists anywhere in the world for their opinions - opening up telemedicine for us!

The photo on the right shows the camera in use.



ALBINISM

Kwale Eye Centre provides support for people with albinism in the surrounding area. People with albinism face many challenges - not only do they stand out, and are therefore stigmatised, but they contract skin cancer (as they have no protection against the sun) and often die before adulthood.

They cannot see as well due to lack of pigment in the eye, and are very sensitive to light. Children with albinism really benefit from sunglasses, and also often need prescription spectacles. We find that when they get help with their vision, they can really excel at school!

We also provide sun creams with a high SPF, and give advice regarding long sleeved clothes, hats, and avoiding direct sunlight to reduce the risk of skin cancer.



TRAINING

In the grand scheme of things, training is by far the most important thing we do - it ensures affordable, accessible eye care will be available for years to come. Dr Khalila is a post-grad ophthalmologist from Nairobi university, and Ramadhan is an ophthalmic clinical officer from Kenya Medical Training Centre. Both do elective terms with us to get hands on experience, and develop their skills and expertise.



Dr Khalila working at the Eye Centre



Ramadhan receiving a letter of recommendation.

FUNDRAISING

Many thanks to the Salisbury Big Band who held a fundraising concert and raffle in aid of Eyes For East Africa. In excess of £750 was raised, and a fantastic evening was had by all!



NEWS - MARCH 2018

A NEW CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND!

Kwale Eye Centre are absolutely thrilled with their new playground - making them a more child friendly environment. This project was supported by the charity CBM (www.cbmuk.org.uk). Below are some photos of the grand opening!



official opening



Staff from CBM, and children from the Likoni school for the Visually Impaired.

GLAUCOMA WEEK

World Glaucoma week was held between 11th - 17th March. It allows us to raise awareness of this condition in the community. As glaucoma can go unnoticed to the patient for quite a long time, we can explain why **everyone** needs an eye check.



Kwale Eye Centre staff with the message "Avoid blindness, get your eyes tested."



Dena, our community based worker, counsels a patient with glaucoma.



Dabson, our nurse, gives a talk to local children on glaucoma awareness.

£6000 RAISED FOR EYES FOR EAST AFRICA

We were thrilled when the ladies of Rothley Park Golf Club, Leicester, chose us as their charity of the year. Through various golfing and social events they have raised an incredible £6000! Pippa Arkle, Ladies Captain, says, "I was so pleased to be able to present a cheque for £6025 to fellow Rothley Park members George Walton and Jonathan Arkle. George has been on the board of trustees for Eyes for East Africa for many years, and Jonathan, my husband, who I met whilst working in Kenya, is the newest recruit, joining as Treasurer last year."

On behalf of the charity and the many, many people this donation will benefit - thank you.



NEWS - APRIL 2018

TRAINING

We report a lot on the training that goes on at the Eye Centre - because it really is the most important thing we do.

The photo below shows Chege at work. Chege is an ophthalmic clinical officer who has just completed his training at the Eye Centre. He hopes to work in Rombo - a small village in Kenya near Mount Kilimanjaro. There is very little health care in this area, so his presence will greatly benefit the local community.

Part of Cheges training costs were covered by [Right to Sight Norway](#).



KWALE HEALTH FORUM

The Eye Centre set up the 'Kwale Health Forum' over 20 years ago and it is now owned by the Ministry for Health.

It is a long meeting held every month where anyone interested in health care and share what they are doing.

This is so important - it means everyone working in the local area can get to know each other, and it promotes working together.



THE IMPORTANCE OF SPECTACLES

Did you know that refractive error (that is, needing a pair of specs) is a major cause of low vision and even blindness?? If you are a glasses wearer imagine how difficult it would be to carry out your day to day tasks without them! The need to provide eye tests and spectacles is increasingly recognized. Not everyone can come to us, or even attend our satellite clinics in the community. We have started sending teams to local workplaces so employees can get tested there, and get glasses if need be.



DEVELOPING NEW SKILLS

The Eye Centre owns a 'phoropter' - an instrument which holds lots of trial lenses and helps us determine what strength of glasses patients need. It is an alternative to the old fashioned 'trial frame', and can make eye tests quicker and more accurate. Our optometrist, Ole, hadn't had much experience using a phoropter so didn't really like it. That is until Anne Jervill, a lovely lady from Norway sent from Right to Sight, came and trained Ole on how to use it. He is now much more confident and prefers using it. "It is faster," Ole explains, "and the cylinder axis is more consistent." The photo shows Ole using the phoropter.



CONGRATULATIONS!

A massive congratulations to our receptionist Razia, who wedded the love of her life Abdul Dzengo. The colourful ceremony took place on 22nd April, and we wish the couple health and happiness in their life together.



NEWS - MAY 2018

RESEARCH

The staff and volunteers of Kwale Eye Centre have published a large number of scientific research papers over the years. Most recently, a research paper concerning the treatment of glaucoma and ocular hypertension (high pressure in the eye) was presented at the Royal College of Ophthalmologists annual congress in the UK. A poster with the research was up on display, and Dr. Sarah Lucie, one of the researchers, was there to talk about it.



EYES FOR EAST AFRICA TRUSTEE VISITS THE EYE CENTRE

Jonno Arkle, Treasurer of Eyes for East Africa, and his wife Pippa, recently visited the Eye Centre.

Pippa, as president of Rothley Golf Club in the UK, recently raised over £6,000 for the Eye Centre. You can read more about this in the April news.

Jonno grew up in Kenya, so he has seen first hand how desperately affordable, accessible eye care is needed in the area.



SURGERY CHANGING LIVES!

Cataract is still the number one cause of blindness in the developing world - yet it can be treated with a simple 20 minute operation. The problem of course is expense, and lack of available eye care services.

Kwale Eye Centre aims to make quality, affordable eye care available to all in the community. The photo below shows some recent patients looking very happy after their cataract surgery. They can see again!



VISITING MEDICAL STUDENTS FROM THE UK

We recently had the pleasure of welcoming Chris Norbury and Tom Gabbott to the Eye Centre. Chris is a medical student from the UK, and Tom is a medical student intercalating in International Health Studies - he is researching why people fear cataract surgery.

Visits from medical students can be inspirational - both ways round!



Chris, Dr. Helen, and Tom



Chris examining a young patient



Tom visiting a child who has had cataract surgery

A LIFE SAVED

A young girl was brought to the eye centre with a droopy eye lid and a white pupil. Unfortunately what was found was more serious than the parents could have imagined - a rare eye cancer called retinoblastoma.

This young patient was referred to the teaching hospital as an emergency, where her eye was removed, and chemotherapy and radiotherapy given.

A reminder of just how important accessible eye care is - sometimes it can save a life.



NEWS - JUNE 2018

FUNDRAISING IN KENYA!

A few miles from the Kwale Eye Centre's main base is the beautiful Diani Beach. Every year an event called 'Diani Rules' is held there to raise money to fund the fight against needless blindness.

This year 12 teams of 8 people took part in fun sports events on the beach. A raffle and auction were also held on the day. An amazing 400,000 Kenyan Shillings (over £3000 GBP) was raised! A massive thank you to all involved!



TRAINING

Training is by far the most important thing we do. We are recognized as a training centre by the university of Nairobi and train Ophthalmic clinical officers, nurses, project officers, optometrists, and field workers.

The photos show Dr. Mutinda who spent some time with us recently. He will be a fully qualified ophthalmologist in a few years, helping make avoidable blindness a thing of the past!



JANE TAPLEY VISITS

Jane Tapley is a UK based orthoptist who has given so much of her time and expertise to the Eye Centre. She recently visited the Eye Centre again and was very impressed with the Low Vision program.

The Low Vision program primarily deals with children who have had cataract surgery, or are visually impaired and need help and follow up in school or at home.



Jane teaching Eye Centre staff

SCHOOL SCREENINGS

Vision screening in schools are important for a number of reasons. A child with blurry vision may simply not know that their vision is not normal. Even if the child or parents are aware there is a problem, it can sometimes be difficult to find accessible, affordable eye care. Kwale Eye Centre recently carried out screening in a local school, funded by a UK donor. The teacher (in pink in the photographs) became interested and helped out during the screening. Eye Centre staff trained her on how to measure children's vision and gave her a letter chart. She can continue to screen all new pupils to the school and contact us if she identifies any child who may need our help.



NEWS - JULY / AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2018

SIGHT RESTORING SURGERIES

Kinango Baptist Church in southern Kenya recently held an eye screening event and many people with poor vision were identified. In Kenya the leading cause of blindness is still cataract, and this can be fixed with a simple operation. The photos show some very happy people who suffered from poor vision but who can now see again!



Just after surgery...



...and with the eye pads off! Happy to see again!

WORKING WITH ASOS AND SOKO

'SOKO' is a Kenyan clothing manufacturer located not too far from the Eye Centre. Their focus is on ethical, sustainable practices, and their clothes are sold by the well known UK clothing company ASOS ('As Seen On Screen'). They recently invited us to carry out an eye screening for their staff, and paid for any surgeries and / or glasses needed.



HELP FROM 'RIGHT TO SIGHT'

Right to Sight is an Eye Charity which has been working with Kwale Eye Centre. Hilde, an ophthalmologist from Right to Sight, has visited to see our work and decide how Right to Sight can help us best. Anne is an optometrist from the charity and has worked with the optometry department to help us improve. This kind of support is invaluable - we want to provide the best care possible for the community!



Albert, one of our cataract surgeons, accompanies Anne and Hilde on a screening trip.



Anne and Hilde talk to students at a local school. Educating young people about eye health, and how to look after their eyes helps prevent problems in the future.

Hilde visits the home of a lady who has just had eye surgery. Here she is checking eye health to ensure all is healing as it should. It is beneficial to see patients in their home environment, as it allows us to understand what problems they may have day to day and help them.



SOME WELL DESERVED FUN!

All of the staff at the Eye Centre work incredibly hard to ensure we give the best eye care to the community. It is important everyone works as team to get the job done! With that in mind, the staff were treated to a team building day in Kalifi - a town on the south coast of Kenya. They had great fun playing games, and from the photos it looks like they also enjoyed a delicious supper!



Playing 'Blind mans football'



Lean on your workmates!



SUPPER!

NEWS - OCTOBER / NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2018

WORLD SIGHT DAY 2018

World Sight Day is an annual day of awareness, held to focus global attention on blindness and visual impairment. This year it fell on 11th October.

To mark World Sight Day, Kwale Eye Centre held an eye screening event in the local area and screened around 200 people. Our staff member Kimanzi also went on local radio to raise awareness on the importance of eye health.



Screening for eye disease in the local area



Kimanzi on the radio!

TRUSTEE VISITS THE EYE CENTRE

We say it time and time again, but training is the most important thing we do! Roger Humphry recently visited the Eye Centre. He is an honorary ophthalmic surgeon to the Eye Centre, and a trustee of Eyes For East Africa. This time he was training the Eye Centre staff on paediatric squint surgery.



CUSTOMER SERVICE WEEK

The staff at the Eye Centre had great fun recently celebrating 'Customer Service Week.' They decided to dress in traditional African attire for the day and looked absolutely fantastic!





HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of our supporters a very happy Christmas and New Year. We are so grateful for all the support received over the past year, it really makes such a difference! Thank you.



Eye Centre staff and patients feeling festive!