

NARROW FOCUS – WIDE IMPACT

Medical Support in Romania (MSR) exists for the relief of sickness in Eastern & Central Europe, especially Romania, through the promotion of high standards of health care and good clinical practice. MSR focuses locally where aid is concerned, but nationally with regard to training.

Between 1990 & 2007, 209 medical & specialist personnel, mostly from the UK, have made 340 visits to Romania, mostly to the Emergency Hospital in Zalau, which is twinned with Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Cambridgeshire.

During the same period there have been 89 training visits by Romanian medical & other staff to the UK.

Strategy



Outcomes

- 1. Focus on a single institution, Salaj District Hospital, piloting ideas and practices with the potential for national impact on health care**
- 2. Assess hospital needs by regular visits of experts, who establish long-term friendships and relationships with local staff**
- 3. Upgrade and support the hospital's development through provision of appropriate equipment, consumables, expertise & training,**
- 4. Encourage support from health care authorities, local government and business to ensure sustainable development**

Past projects

- Departments affecting whole hospital - Radiology, Laboratories, Pathology.
- Vital but unglamorous departments - Mortuary, Laundry, Stores
- Medical Appreciation (1991), Nursing Appreciation (1999)
- Other improvements: IT/Internet access, A & E, Endoscopy, Ophthalmology, Delivery Suite, Paediatrics, Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy

The past achievements and projects would not have been possible without the close collaboration of the staff of Salaj District Hospital, whose Director was a speaker at the Romania Think Tank's June 2005 Bucharest conference on Health Care Reform. MSR assisted with the planning of this conference and provided 4 speakers from the UK.

Current & Future Projects

- Sterile Services - Fully funded thanks to a single £350,000 grant. Implementation just completed with ongoing monitoring
- Infection Control Training Course
- Patient Representative in Zalau (Pilot)
- Ongoing support for past projects
- English tuition for hospital staff

Pilots

- Laundry re-equipped in collaboration with Bucharest Institute of Public Health, leading to new national laundry regulations
- First ever Forensic Ambulance equipped with full autopsy facilities
- Re-equipment & refurbishment of Delivery Suite & Mortuary
- New paediatric surgical ward; rare in Romanian district hospitals
- Following installation of 6 X-ray units, patient radiation dose was massively reduced and the department gave "7 times less dose than the norm in Transylvania"

National

- Involvement of the Bucharest Institute of Public Health
- 4th National Pathology meeting hosted by Salaj Hospital (1998)
- Parliament & Romanian Ministry of Health approved funding for major infrastructure investment in the hospital, namely the introduction of methane gas and new boilers *
- Funded the 1995 Imaging Course at the Oxford Centre for Radiographic Studies for 12 Romanian imaging specialists
- Assisted June 2005 Health Care Reform conference in Bucharest

Local

- IT equipment installation led to the hospital creating its own website
- Concept and value of voluntary work developed by generous Romanian hosts who have found local sponsorship, opened their homes and frequently worked extra hours without pay to support the work of MSR
- Morale of staff increased; attitudes towards health care improved
- Hospital's capacity for improved diagnosis, treatment and care has benefited the district's inhabitants

Sustainability

- Salaj District Hospital twinned with Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon, UK (1995)
- Need identified for establishing support structure similar in role to the UK Leagues of Friends for NHS hospitals

** "The investment was approved absolutely owing to the collaboration that Salaj District Hospital has with MSR ... The introduction of the methane gas was the most important condition to achieve the Project of Infrastructure, a project that ...can be a pilot project for all the hospitals within the country." - Hospital Director, 1999*

Donations: Cheques payable to *Medical Support in Romania*. MSR accepts CAF Vouchers and can reclaim tax under the Gift Aid scheme on qualifying personal donations.

Volunteering: MSR draws on support from British NHS staff, medical students, teachers of English, amongst others.

Added Value: Moneys given to MSR have considerable leverage for the following reasons:

- No salaries are paid, including to the director
- Generous discounts & product donation by companies
- Visiting UK specialists and teachers of English give their time with almost all covering their own travel expenses
- Training freely given at UK medical institutions
- Salaj Hospital, with the help of staff and local sponsors, hosts UK specialists with accommodation and meals
- British companies loan vans for the delivery of supplies
- Channel ferry crossings & van insurance usually given
- Cambridge HQ is rent free

Director & Trustee

Patrick Colquhoun MA
Treasurer, Anglo-Nordic Productions Trust, Cambridge

Treasurer & Trustee

Michael H Woodisse FCA
Former Finance Director, Grant Instruments, Cambridge

Trustees

Kathleen Butcher RN, BSc, Dip N
Recently retired Clinical Manager of A&E Department, Addenbrooke's NHS Trust

Dr Fiona Cornish MA, MRCP
General Medical Practitioner, Cambridge

Dr Mark Farrington MA, FRCP
Consultant Microbiologist, Health Protection Agency
Clinical Director of Pathology, Addenbrooke's NHS Trust

Lady Hawley DL
High Sheriff of Wiltshire 1998,
St John's Ambulance: County President Wiltshire 1983-95
Regional Representative on National Council 1999-2002
Director, Wiltshire Healthcare NHS Trust 1991-97
Member Swindon Health Authority 1984-1990

Dr Cristina Matei MD, MRCPCH
Paediatric Registrar, West Suffolk Hospital NHS Trust

Dr A Wilfred R Kelsall FRCP, FRCPCH
Consultant Paediatric Cardiologist & Neonatologist, Addenbrooke's NHS Trust

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Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland, 82-88 Hills Road,
Cambridge CB2 1LG

Note: MSR's Trust Deed of 29 July 1996 was registered in England as a charity on 30 September 1996. It continues the charitable activities begun earlier in 1990. Full accounts are available upon request.

Total gifts received to date 31 December 2007

Gifts totalling £1,422,042 to date, come from five main sources, as shown opposite. The specialist travel category represents the self-funded costs of some 230 medical & other volunteers giving time in Romania.

Value of equipment delivered to date

The value of hospital equipment & consumables supplied since 1990 is £3.8 million, This includes full funding for the Sterile Services project at Salaj Hospital in Zalau.

Sterile Services Project update

£350,000 was donated in 2006. Project completed late 2007. Cost over-run: 4.2%.

3,756 individuals	21.5%
183 Trusts & Foundations	68.6%
219 Schools, companies, churches	6.8%
Government & British Council	0.2%
Specialist travel sponsorship (since '96)	2.9%
Total gifts received	£1,422,042

- Past & Present Collaboration -

Institute of Public Health, Bucharest - Ministry of Health, Bucharest - Department of Public Health, Salaj, Romania - Romanian Embassy, London
Hungarian Embassy, London - International Division, Department of Health, London - Department for International Development (DfID)
World Bank - Addenbrooke's NHS Trust, Cambridge - Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Huntingdon - British Executive Services Overseas (BESO)
Rotary Clubs - Romanian Information Centre, Southampton University, Southampton - British Executive Services Overseas (BESO)
The Calderdale & Huddersfield NHS Trust - The Romania Think Tank, Bucharest