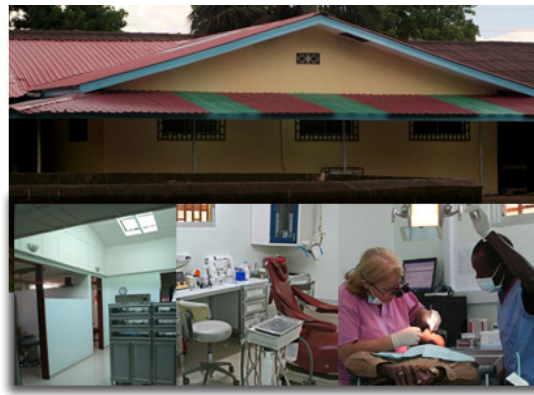


Thank you.

We are happy to say we have already been able to help over 800 people in our first four months, and many of those patients have been back for two or more appointments. We see more and more people asking us to examine all their teeth, realizing the need for prevention. This used to be a very rare occurrence. We are also so pleased that the fees we are charging seem to be completely affordable to anyone and everyone. Thanks to all of you for making this happen.



Not much to report, or so we thought...

As we get into more of a "routine" with the clinic, it has felt like there's not as much to report; most of our days filled with what seems common to us, general and some smaller surgical dentistry. This explains a bit of why you haven't heard from us in a while. But although I was sending some news today regardless, the routine was suddenly broken, as it often is in Liberia. I took a break from writing this newsletter to drop some education printouts off at the clinic. When I arrived, I learned that one of our patients who already had a tooth extracted began to develop a serious infection and was sent to the emergency room with a fever of 108 (42.2C) (yes, 108-- not a typo!) and a blood pressure of 80/40 (again, not a typo!). I do not think we have ever seen anyone with a fever this high from a dental infection, or any condition for that matter. Even Dr. Sacra, the ELWA doctor from the U.S., had never seen a fever this high. The patient tested negative for malaria. He was in a panic and uncontrollable, disoriented, uninhibited, making it difficult to even start an IV. It was a wonder he was not having a seizure. This infection was most likely present when the tooth was extracted, but getting the tooth out will 99.9% of the time allow the body to rid itself of whatever infection remains. But this case was undoubtedly in the small remaining percentage and the outcome could be very serious if the patient becomes septic. Please pray for this young man. As I finish writing this, he was doing much better and responsive; a relief since a fever this high could have easily caused brain damage.

Healthier Gums for Liberia

Our team grew about six weeks ago by the addition of Brenda Pigeon, a dental hygienist who will be with us for four months. It is great to be able to increase the spectrum of what we are able to offer the patients. Before Brenda came Frieda and I had almost no time to focus on the periodontal health of the patients. And as Brenda can affirm, cleaning teeth here is no small, quick thing; she broke three tips on her ultrasonic cleaner within the first week. She has been a wonderful help both in her field and helping out whenever an extra hand is needed.

A "Light" Miracle

A curing light is the device we use to set up tooth colored fillings (i.e., turn them hard). Seemingly due to power fluctuations, we lost 3 out of 4 lights in our possession, and the fourth was showing signs it may not last much longer. The answer was pretty clear, sug-

gested by Brenda: a rechargeable curing light that would only use battery power when operating and would not be susceptible to damage from the power line. Although it would be an unexpected expense, getting things over here is the other difficulty we faced. Sending things to a container can take up to 4-5 months to arrive, by which time our other light might be dead as well.

Enter Dr. Charley Snow, a dentist from Austin, TX (only 90 minutes from my home town) who had been in the country for three weeks operating a temporary clinic based in a local orphanage. He needed to do a biopsy on a patient and found out about ELWA hospital and, in turn, the dental clinic. He ended up coming in to do the biopsy and commented on one of our lights. I told him about our problem and how we planned to order a rechargeable light. He said, "I have one here. I'll leave it for you!" If the timing hadn't been so incredibly perfect, I would have returned home to an e-mail from my friend, coming here in April from the U.S., saying he was willing to bring the new light over for us.

Thank you, Dr. Snow! And thanks to God for lining this up.

Economic Wake Up

We could not dare say that we are experiencing the economic change that is happening probably as much as anyone in the West, but when your work and even personal income is dependent on donations, you tend to get nervous when you hear the word "Crisis" after the word "Economic". But we are so grateful to see regular and even one time gifts to the clinic continuing to come in. Thanks to all of you for continuing to stay involved. It seems times like this wake all of us up to all that we truly have and all that is truly important.

Start up expenses and higher than expected shipping costs have left us in a financial pinch. Fortunately, the yearly expenses necessary to continue the clinic may be much less than originally estimated. At this point, not including the materials we use, the clinic is sustaining its monthly expenses such as utilities and salaries, so every penny you give should be able to go completely to our material needs. Our goal is to raise \$3,000 a month for the next 3-4 months, which would enable us to order half of the following year's supplies and materials. As I previously stated with shipping, it can take up to five months to get things here, so we have to be prepared and think way ahead! Thanks for considering helping us. Please visit our website www.trinitydental.org and click on "Contribute" to help.

P.S.

Many of you have asked about the young boy I wrote about meeting in front of my house one day whose teeth had been broken. Rest assured, he has been healing the last several weeks and is now awaiting an appliance to replace the front teeth. He will be all fixed up in just a few days and I promise to send some pictures. Thanks so much for asking.

Thanks as always for your continued prayers and support.

He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap;
he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor. **1 Samuel 2:8**

www.trinitydental.org