



CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION – MALAWI

April 2020



“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7

Worry. Anxiety. Panic. Dismay. Fear. Uncertainty. Despair. We can keep listing words about all the feelings that are going around right now during this unprecedented time in the world’s history. There are enough to fill this letter. In times of uncertainty, our human-ness makes it easy to forget that God is in control and that He knows what He is doing and rather to start coming up with all of these ideas on what we need to do to “fix” this situation. I read recently “God didn’t ask for help when He created the world, why would He need it now?” That really gave us a very clear picture of who is in control.

As of Saturday, 28 March 2020, at 9:15am (Central time), there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 (or CoronaVirus) in Malawi and there are 22 in Zambia – most of which are confined to Lusaka, which is more than 100 km from our clinic in Mwembezhi. Even though there is limited exposure, the Central Africa Medical Mission is still forced to make decisions about the clinics and our staff. In Zambia, the government has done a good job of educating their citizens about the spread of the virus and the preventative measures that Zambians can take now. They have been supporting us out at our clinic – including getting us some extra supplies, providing a statistician to help keep them updated on what is happening there and making sure that their Environmental Health Technician is out in the villages educating them, as well. Our clinical director, Jackson Kalekwa, and our Administrator, Alisad Banda, have been closely following the instructions of the government and have been requiring hand washing of every patient as they come into the clinic and limiting the number of people who can be in the clinic at one time. CAMM will continue to monitor the situation in Zambia to keep our staff and our patients as protected as possible during this pandemic.

The Malawi government, on the other hand hasn’t done nearly as much work in preparing their citizens as they have in Zambia. Although there are no confirmed cases at this point, the Malawi government knows that the best preventative measure will be to try to keep the virus from coming into the country. They will be restricting travel - on April 1 airports will be closed to international flights, border crossings will also close and there will limits to travel on buses, taxis, trains and boats. There have been radio spots informing people about the disease but to date the Government run rural health centers have received little or no training. Our staff with the LMC has been teaching about COVID-19 to our patients at each clinic site. We know that although the government has given some social distancing recommendations (such as staying a meter away from another person and no gatherings over 100 people), it is nearly impossible to follow them. For instance, we regularly have over 200 people at clinic on any given day right now due to it being the rainy season. We are keenly aware that as we operate a mobile clinic and travel out to 4 villages from the largest city of Malawi, Lilongwe, we are in a precarious position of being carriers from one of these places to another. The government has shut down its own mobile clinics. All of this could cause us to be overwhelmed with what to do.

Instead, we reach our hands out to God. We ask that he continue to watch over Malawi and if it is His will, that Malawi continue to be protected against COVID-19. We ask that if the country does see the virus, that He limit the number of deaths. We thank him that Zambia and Malawi are about to come upon the maize harvest and we ask for a plentiful harvest so that the both the Zambians and the Malawians have food to eat. We ask that He lead us to make the best decisions for our staff and patients when it comes to the operations of the clinic. We thank him for his grace and mercy and for sending his Son to save us. Finally, we ask for the peace of mind, heart and spirit that in him, we are always safe. Won’t you please pray with us?

“The LORD will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.” Psalm 121: 7-8

In Christ,

CAMM Stateside Committee

Gary Evans - CAMM Field Director