



# Soft Power Health

ALLAN STONE COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINIC



Dr. Oliver examines a clinic patient recovering from severe malaria in December 2021.

## Living Through the Pandemic

For the past two years, COVID-19 has dominated the developed world, and it is no different here in Uganda. Although the Delta Variant's impact on unvaccinated Ugandans was devastating, few outside the country knew what was happening.

Delta's rapid spread led to countrywide illness and death, causing Uganda's government healthcare system to collapse. Private healthcare providers like Soft Power Health were forced to fill in gaps, including treating patients infected with COVID-19, something an outpatient clinic does not normally do.

Luckily, with the help of partners like Nama Wellness, Kamu Clinic, St. Francis, Segal Family Foundation, and Gould Family Foundation, SPH created a special COVID ward.

Since converting our physiotherapy suite into a COVID-19 ward, we have tested, treated, stabilized and referred 348 patients in 2021.

## Hope for a Healthier Future

With a lack of vaccines, a high death toll, and poor healthcare infrastructure, Africa has been hardest hit by the pandemic globally. In Uganda, Soft Power Health's staff was fully vaccinated earlier this year, but access for the average citizen has lagged far behind. Although COVAX and developed world governments have increased vaccine delivery, the true numbers of dead and severely ill may never be known.

Routine vaccines, such as measles and tetanus, often fail to reach rural communities because cold storage is not available. Hoping for the miracle of enough COVID-19 vaccines as well as effective delivery is unrealistic.

However; there is hope for early COVID-19 treatment from Merck, who has taken the extraordinary step of removing the patent for this medication for low-income countries like Uganda, allowing in-country production and thus, affordable medication prices. Thank you Merck for helping those most in need!



Children receive deworming medication at a malnutrition outreach session in Muguluka.



## Always Putting Patients First

Soft Power Health has many outstanding healthcare practitioners on its roster, and nurse James is among our best. He has consistently put SPH patients first, going the extra distance to improve their treatment.

During the second lockdown, James restarted the childhood immunization program and delivered essential cardiac medicines to patients who were unable to travel to the clinic.

Using his own time and money to help those in need, James has set a new standard for patient care. Thank you James!

## Childhood Vaccinations During the Pandemic

Statistically, routine childhood immunizations around the globe are down, making once disappeared deadly diseases like measles and polio emerge again.



Mothers gather with their babies for immunizations at the clinic.



During the Delta variant lockdown, James rallied his fellow nurses and the local community in Kyabirwa and Bujagali villages to restart childhood immunization days every Friday. From the start of the campaign for routine vaccination, attendance has been excellent! Even those without transport can now walk to get immunizations!



James answers questions and nurses Doreen and Viola document and administer vaccinations.

## In The Spotlight

Dr. Henry saved the day during the Delta Variant lockdown. As fear and burnout have permeated the medical community, Dr. Henry redoubled his leadership efforts – offering weekly continuing medical education sessions for all staff on COVID-19 and the misinformation surrounding it, as well as the virus's effects and prevention.

During Delta's darkest hour, Dr. Henry singlehandedly ran SPH's COVID-19 ward when nurses and lab technicians were too afraid to treat COVID-positive patients. We are proud and honored to have Dr. Henry's daily efforts guide our clinic team. Thank you Dr. Henry for being an exemplary role model and leader!



Dr. Henry leads a CME for SPH staff during the Delta lockdown.

## Net Sales Remain Strong Throughout the Pandemic!

During the pandemic, the government of Uganda distributed free mosquito nets yet again, but without education about malaria prevention and correct net use!

Though nets reached some communities, many missed out. This was an opportunity for Soft Power Health's malaria program, which found unserved communities and provided malaria education sessions and net sales.

As the Delta lockdown paused malaria outreaches, people continued purchasing nets at the clinic. Malaria cases have remained steady throughout the pandemic alongside the demand for nets and education. In 2021, Sarah and Maria, SPH's malaria outreach team, educated over 1,000 people, sold 570 nets, and made 260 follow-up home visits. Together with clinic net sales, over 2,000 nets have been sold this year.

Thank you Sarah and Maria for reaching as many communities as possible. Your hard work has paid off!



Sarah and Maria conduct a malaria outreach session.

## Getting A Grip! Hypertension in Uganda

Although Soft Power Health's patient population share cardiovascular disease as the number one health problem with the developed world, a big difference is that Ugandans have a much harder time affording medication despite the SPH subsidized price.

High blood pressure (hypertension) is the most common disease treated at the clinic. Untreated hypertension commonly leads to congestive heart failure and stroke in Uganda. In 2021, SPH will treat over 7,000 cases of hypertension with anti-hypertensives, the most expensive medications bought by Soft Power Health.

Underlying causes of hypertension remain unclear, but treatment in the form of isometric handgrip exercises make it possible to reduce the serious health sequelae seen in Uganda and throughout the world. These exercises have been shown to lower blood pressure as much as 30% - a promising development for hypertensive patients everywhere.



A stroke patient does exercises with SPH physiotherapists in 2019.

## New Faces and New Roles

Soft Power Health hired three new members of staff and promoted two others! Nurse Denis comes with accolades of praise and experience to step into James's role as head of family planning and malnutrition while James pursues a medical degree. Dr. Zam Zam joins us as a new medical officer with tremendous enthusiasm and knowledge, and nurse Tabitha joins us as a core part of our nursing team for clinic and outreach work.

A hearty welcome and thank you for joining the team!

## Family Planning

Running for 15 years, 39 FP outreaches occur quarterly providing education and implementation - even during the lockdowns! Over 4,000 women received long-term family planning methods. Returning women comprise 79% of uptake, 21% are new users, and 85% of all family planning occurs in outreach while 15% takes place at the clinic.



Nurse Dennis leads a family planning session in Kyomya.



## Soft Power Health's Courageous Cruiser

It's unbelievable how essential this vehicle is to the daily Soft Power Health operation. Originally purchased in 2007 with 6,000 kilometers, the cruiser has now driven over 600,000 KM's – transporting patients, staff, medicines and lab supplies – 6 days a week on rough Ugandan roads! The cruiser has brought over 14,000 individual health education outreaches to rural communities and transported more than 20,000 patients for treatment to the clinic and beyond.

The pandemic created much higher than usual use for the cruiser, as it was the **only** transport Soft Power Health had permission to use during lockdowns. This made it a vital part of the clinic's day to day operation by picking up and dropping off staff, patients, medicines, and transporting the outreach teams.

No ordinary car could have done this. Our "Courageous Cruiser" is worth its weight in gold! Sadly, time and extensive use have taken their toll, its body is corroded beyond repair and the engine needs daily tinkering to run.



Finding a replacement for Courageous has become a necessity for 2022. Please help us fundraise the \$50,000 USD needed to buy a new (used) transport vehicle. Time is of the essence as this dependable workhorse's days are numbered. Thank you for your consideration.

## New COVID-19 Building in 2022

Space remains an ongoing issue for Soft Power Health as the clinic gets busier. With the set-up of the COVID-19 ward, our physiotherapy department was displaced. Daily numbers (not including COVID-19 patients) average 150 patients per day and SPH has run out of space to see and treat all patients. Thus, a building to accommodate a new ward, additional doctors' treatment rooms and an office is needed. We've identified an area in the SPH home garden for the new building site.

Though our model is sustaining and maintaining, not growth – basic healthcare continues to be in high demand. We hope to stay below capacity once the new building is completed. At least for a few years!

## New Daily Operations Manager: Mary Akiror

With Julius Cesar's departure in February 2021, an opportunity opened up for Mary Akiror. Mary willingly took on the enormous task of keeping the clinic and outreach programs running daily – essential for a smooth SPH operation. This is challenging during non-pandemic times, but the second lockdown created immense obstacles to overcome. The learning curve was steep, but Mary met the demands and blossomed in the role.



Well done, Mary! And thank you!

## A Fond Farewell and a Warm Welcome

Country manager Kirsten Bunkeddeko has been with Soft Power Health for the past three years. She has been an absolute life saver during her tenure, steadfastly steering Soft Power Health throughout the rocky pandemic period. We would have been lost without her. Thankfully, Hannah Fromont has arrived to take over and guide us into 2022 and beyond. Welcome Hannah!



Hannah and Kirsten discussing SPH operations.

## The Kids' Kayaking Camp is Back

Thanks to Sean Coffey: teacher, kayaker, and all-around awesome human, Soft Power Health restarted its inner city kids kayaking camp this past summer. With a pandemic forced end to the last iteration of the camp, Sean connected Soft Power Health with Green Chimneys, a school for students who are not able to attend regular school.



2022 here we come!

The extended Jackson family (EJ, Kristine, Emily, Nick, Dane, KC, Parker, and Tucker) and Jackson Kayak team paddlers (Mason Hargrove and Jessie Stone) along with volunteers Andy Kuhlberg and Brett Lanier joined Sean Coffey in August to restart the camp in a fun-filled and action-packed week.



Soft Power Health treated over 30,000 patients in 2021 and referred 2,000 more for surgery and tertiary care. With over 20,000 people receiving community based health education, prevention, and treatment in combination with 30,000 clinic patients served, over 50,000 people directly benefitted from Soft Power Health's work!



Soft Power Health's main intake area.

39% of 5,000+ pediatric patients triaged in 2021 had severe acute malnutrition. Over 1,600 doses of prescriptive high energy milk (HEM) were given to severely malnourished children with each child receiving an average of 2 HEM doses. Prescriptive HEM is life-saving treatment for these children!



JoJo and Irene mix HEM for patients.

Physical therapists Stephen Kato, Rachel, and Flavia treated 3,500 patients in 2021. 93% of patients were seen at the clinic. 7% were treated in outreach. Lower back pain was the most common condition treated at the clinic. Cerebral palsy was the most common condition treated in outreach.



Kato works with a CP patient.

## Fast Facts

Malaria was bumped to the fifth most common disease treated with over 2,400 malarial episodes treated, after respiratory tract infections reached a new high, thanks to the Delta variant, with nearly 3,000 new respiratory tract infections recorded.



Nurse Godfrey treats a clinic patient while Steve Boda observes.

Domestic violence counseling helped over 700 people, 75% of whom are women, with emotional violence being the most frequent type of violence reported.



Counselor Florence listens to a client.

Dr. Paul treated 300 dental patients in 2021 with periodontal disease making up 50% of dental problems treated.



Dr. Paul discusses proper tooth care.

The DIG Home Garden produced 75 matooke bunches (green bananas), 75 kale bushels, 70 jumbo cassava roots, 110 spinach bunches, 25 papayas, 30 pumpkin leave bunches, 5kgs of eggplants, 300 lemons, and 16 kgs of peas! 500 kgs of maize flour for food insecure community members was harvested from the DIG Demo Garden. Currently, the DIG team is fostering 13 community outreach gardens.



Simon with fresh kale from the SPH home garden.

The malnutrition outreach team provided 28 education sessions with over 1,000 families attending and made 400 individual follow-up home visits. 15,000 people received malnutrition related interventions during outreaches, including distribution of 1,750 vitamin A doses, 2,600 albendazole deworming treatments, and 10,000 prenatal vitamins courses.



Nurse Annet dispenses albendazole.

7,500 cases of high blood pressure were treated at the clinic in 2021, making hypertension the most common disease treated.



A patient waits for her BP results.

## In Gratitude

A special note of thanks goes out to the Segal Family Foundation, Gould Family Foundation, and Agnes Gund for their extraordinary support throughout the pandemic and especially during the Delta lockdown. Without your help, we would not have made it through these challenging times!

### What Your Donations Pay For

- \$7 = one mosquito net covering 3 children, preventing life threatening malaria for up to 5 years.**
- \$14 = one patient's visit to the clinic including doctor consultation, lab work and all medication.**
- \$15 = one month's supply of anti-hypertensive medicines for one patient.**
- \$20 = 1 month's supply of prescriptive HEM for one patient.**
- \$55 = 1 domestic violence counselor's salary for one month.**
- \$90 = One month's salary for the head malaria educator**
- \$160 = 1 laboratory assistant's salary for one month.**
- \$260 = 1 nurse's salary for 1 month.**
- \$310 = 1 physical therapist's salary for one month.**
- \$350 = the salary of a nurse practitioner for one month.**
- \$600 = corrective surgery for one patient with chronic osteomyelitis.**
- \$950 = the salary of a medical doctor for one month.**
- \$1,200 = the head malaria outreach educator's salary for one year.**
- \$10,000 = the DIG organic garden program for one year; maintenance of 30 outreach gardens, a community demo garden and our home garden - providing staff meals 6 days a week.**
- \$60,000 = one year supply of anti-hypertensive medicine to treat 7,500 high blood pressure cases.**

*We welcome donations of any size and every contribution makes a big difference, especially during this challenging time! Thank you very much for helping to make Soft Power Health what it is today. We would not be where we are without you!*

*Thank You Very Much!!!*

### Partner With Us! Two Ways to Give

#### Send check payable to:

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Purchase, NY 10577  
USA

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