We cordially invite you to the

**SA Friends of Vellore Annual Dinner 2010**

**Saturday, 7th August, 2010**
6:30pm for 7:00pm

Fogolar Furlan Hall
69 Briar Rd, Felixstow

**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Isaac Jebaraj, Associate Director, CMCH, Vellore

Join with us for an evening of wonderful Indian food and entertainment

**See the enclosed slip for ticketing details.**

A fund raising event in support of the Christian Medical College and Hospital Vellore, India

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I am really looking forward to the FOV Dinner on August 7th and hearing from our guest speaker Dr Issac Jeberaj. It should be a wonderful evening of learning more of the work of Vellore and promoting financial support; great Indian food and dancing and catching up with friends. Thanks to all on the committee for helping make it possible.

The Board of the Australian FOV will be holding its AGM in Melbourne on Sat August 14th with Dr Issac Jeberaj in attendance.

Hoping to see as many as possible at the dinner.

Best wishes,
Dr Lawrie Palmer, President, SA FOV
Promote the ‘India – Australia’ medical connection

Dr Chris Clohesy

There is a rich medical history that connects Australia and India. Over the years many doctors who have trained in India have worked in Australia and many doctors from Australia have travelled to India to work.

An example of this relationship is the remarkable connection between Adelaide and Christian Medical College (CMC) Hospital in Vellore, Southern India. There are many doctors currently working in SA who trained in Vellore. There are many doctors working in SA who have travelled to Vellore either as a medical student or clinician to work in CMC Hospital for a short time.

What has sustained this relationship?

Christian Medical College Hospital was founded by the American missionary Dr Ida Scudder in the early 1900’s. Ida Scudder devoted her entire life to developing the hospital. Ida Scudder also recognised early in her career, the need for training Indian women to address the medical needs of women of India. As a result, she started a medical school for women in Vellore. Over the last 100 years the hospital has grown to be a major hospital with 2,500 beds and the medical school, with an intake of both men and women, is world renowned. Despite Christianity being a minor religion in India, the hospital and medical school have maintained their Christian heritage.

In a country where there is no Medicare safety net and the ability to pay can determine level of care, CMC Hospital uses funds raised from patients that can afford to pay and from funds raised by ‘Friends of Vellore’ societies around the world, to care for the many thousands of patients that cannot afford healthcare. As a result, the hospital’s reputation attracts patients not only from all over India and from neighbouring countries such as Nepal, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka.

Adelaide has an active ‘Friends of Vellore’ Society, currently chaired by Dr Lawrie Palmer, Palliative Care Specialist at Modbury Hospital. This group not only raises funds for the hospital but has a very important role in promoting the relationship between CMC Hospital and the medical community in Adelaide.

It has been sad to see the current tensions arising between India and Australia as a result of the attacks on Indian students in Melbourne and Sydney. The assaults have quite rightly attracted widespread media condemnation in India and Australia. In 2009, 70,000 Indian students studied in Australia (Report: Aus. Tourism Forecasting Committee). But the number of Indians applying for student visas to Australia has plummeted by half according to the most recent figures from the immigration department.

In the face of this tension, the Adelaide medical community, with our strong links with the Indian medical community, has an important role to play to promote the relationship with India. Our connection with CMC Hospital is a good example of how we can foster this relationship. In 2010 two Paediatric Registrars from CMC Hospital will be working at the Women’s and Children’s Hospital after which they will return to India. We need to continue to
promote these rotations. We need to encourage our medical students to undertake electives in India. In Medic SA, June 2009 edition, Chris Wong, a fifth year medical student wrote about his visit to CMC Hospital which was supported by an elective grant from the AMA(SA).

Another way to contribute is by providing medical education. Recently Health Serve Australia has made a request for medical educators to help deliver a Post Graduate Diploma in Family Medicine from CMC Hospital in Vellore. Health Serve Australia was established in 2004 to assist with health needs in developing countries. However the focus is more on health development rather than disaster relief.

I travelled to CMC Hospital in November as a medical educator for the Diploma in Family Medicine program. What an amazing experience, first travelling to Vellore from Chennai and then seeing the fantastic work doctors and nurses are doing at CMC Hospital. Huge numbers of patients attending the hospital everyday puts massive pressure on the system. It was great to see Dr Anil Kuruvilla, a previous Registrar at WCH, now director of the Neonatal ICU unit at CMC. I also met Dr Ji Ji Matthews, an Obstetric Consultant and previous Obstetric Registrar at WCH and Dr Anna Simon, Oncology Consultant and previous Registrar at the WCH. It is these professional links that maintain the strong connection with Adelaide and CMC Hospital.

I also visited a smaller hospital in Vellore, CHAD, that offers free health care to the very poor. The grace with which the nursing staff carried themselves was only matched by their beautiful mode of dress.

For more information about Health Serve, and medical educators for India, see the Health Serve website, www.healthserve.org.au

This article was originally published by the Australian Medical Association in South Australia in a recent issue of MedicSA.

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**Reminder: CMCH Alumni Meeting**

The Alumni of the Christian Medical College & Hospital, Vellore will be meeting in Adelaide, October 1st - 3rd 2010. The meeting encompasses a scientific session and opportunity for plenty of social interaction. Soaking into local tradition includes a trip to Glenelg for a Dolphin cruise and a visit to the winery.

This interesting group comprises a wide age spectrum, but has a common thread of their Alma Mater linking each one of them. Their association with CMC&H Vellore is something they are very proud of and carry with them in their daily lives.

The meetings will be held at the Hilton, in the Adelaide CBD. For further information and updates please visit: http://cmcadelaide2010.blogspot.com/
International Visitors to CMC

CMC is a fascinating and unique place to visit, and many people ask to come here every year from far and wide. Some come offering voluntary help in clinical and other areas or giving lectures and workshops. Others come to do research, observe, learn and share in their areas of professional interest.

The largest number (and fastest growing category) of visitors are students from medical, nursing and other health science colleges who come here to do elective studies or specific courses. CMC has memoranda of understanding with many universities and colleges around the world, and some of these send students to us in groups or as individuals. For the student visitors CMC is a chance not only to experience hospital life in a different culture, but also to see a wide variety of specialities and a large number of patients, many suffering from diseases that are rare or non-existent in the students’ home countries.

As far as possible visitors are accommodated on the campus – in Modale Hostel (students), Alumni House, Bergen House, CHTC Guest House and Big Bungalow.

Every month there is an “International Evening” for all overseas guests in the Alumni House. This is hosted by the Development Office and Mrs. Beulah Premkumar, Deputy Director (International Relations). It provides a relaxed opportunity for the guests to meet each other and also CMC staff and ask questions about anything to do with CMC or life in India.

We try to arrange some cultural demonstration or performance, usually by staff or students. During the last few months we have taught the visitors how to tie saris (both women and men had a go!), shown how to cook roti and potato curry, and had a performance of tabla. During 2009, we had a dance recital, flower braiding, rangoli and Indian classical singing. Everyone enjoys these evenings and they are a good meeting point for people from all nations.

Source: CMC Weekly News, May 24th, 2010

SA FOV Clinical Meeting

The Clinical Meeting of SA Friends of Vellore was held on Friday, the 7th of May 2010 at the Rosefield Uniting Church Hall, Highgate. This annual meet is a platform for the alumni and faculty from the Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore to showcase the work of their departments in Vellore, their experiences in Adelaide and their plans for the future. Over the years, this meet has also become an ideal opportunity for medical students from Adelaide who intend to visit Vellore for their overseas placement to get an insight into the services of the Vellore Medical College and the tremendous work that goes on there. It is also an opportunity for the students who have visited Vellore to talk about their experiences.

The first speaker for the evening was Dr Pradeep Poonnoose from the Department of Orthopaedics, Flinders Medical Centre. Dr Poonnoose is an alumnus of CMC who had his undergraduate medical education and postgraduate studies in Orthopaedics at Vellore. He is also currently on the faculty of Orthopaedics at Vellore. He has been in Adelaide since August 2009 and will be returning to Vellore early next year. He gave us an insight into the large Orthopaedics Department in Vellore. He spoke about people involved in major accidents facing the threat of losing their limbs and how Vellore has helped them with limb-conserving operations followed by prolonged rehabilitation, ably supported by their families. Dr Poonnoose has also had formal training in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.
Mr. P.J. Kirk
9 Burnham Ave
Myrtle Bank, SA, 5064

Please accept the enclosed donation of $............... to the work of the Christian Medical College and Hospital at Vellore, India.

Name.......................................................... Post Code....................

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(Donations are tax-deductible if made to the Vellore Christian Medical College and Hospital Support Fund)

Dr. Anil Roy

in the United Kingdom and highlighted the work that goes on at the Rehabilitation Centre in Vellore, where paraplegic and quadriplegic patients undergo rehabilitation for several months before returning to their homes, often self-reliant and supported by their families.

The next speaker was Dr Sam Ebenezer from the Department of Perinatal Medicine at the Women’s & Children’s Hospital, Adelaide. Dr Ebenezer is also an alumnus of CMC who had his undergraduate medical studies and postgraduate training in Paediatrics at Vellore. Subsequently, he worked in a peripheral mission hospital in the south Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. He spoke about the Paediatrics Department in Vellore, the current status of Neonatology in Vellore and the smaller mission hospitals in India. He has been in Adelaide for the last 2 years and is optimistic that this experience will help him improve care of the newborn in the peripheral mission hospital when he returns to India.

Presentations by the alumni from Vellore were followed by a presentation by Ms Ellen Horner, a Final year Medical Student in Adelaide who has just returned after her placement in Vellore along with a few friends. She spent invaluable time with several departments in Vellore and found it a truly rewarding experience. Her account of the exposure to Indian culture and the influence of traditional beliefs and customs in the approach to certain patients was fascinating.

The meeting was attended by friends and well-wishers of Vellore, our local medical students and alumni from Vellore. It certainly gave those present an insight into the services provided by the Christian Medical College at Vellore.

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