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Fundraiser on Feb. 25

Continued from page 7

Last year, CNFA treated 6,535 patients in seven days.

"This year, the clinic will be extended to 11 (days) and we project we will see at least 15,000 people," Wolters said.

The CNFA founder says malaria is the most common disease the clinical staff encounters on its missions, while the acutely ill are taken to hospital where the organization covers all their medical fees — last year CNFA helped admit 10 patients to local hospitals for care.

"Last year, we (also) incorporated a school de-worming program, which we will expand on this year and will set up a program where local nurses will follow-up with de-worming at the schools," she said.

CNFA is also now in talks with an organization to provide a clean water source to the area and latrines at the local schools, said Wolters, whose organization will also help develop a health-teaching program around those initiatives.

All members of CNFA are volunteers and those who travel to Kenya on medical missions, do so at their own expense — paying for airfare, accommodation and food costs, which can reach about \$2,500.

"It is only through the support of our communities that we are able to do this work," said Wolters. "As you can imagine, with the added clinic days and the added programs, it is becoming very expensive... We expect the costs to double or even triple."

That's why CNFA is holding a gala fundraiser this month to help cover the costs of medical supplies and running the clinics.

Hoping to raise \$15,000 towards the 2012 mission, the Feb. 25 gala will be held at the Polish National Union Hall, 2316 Fairview St. in Burlington. It will include dinner, dancing, entertainment and a silent auction.

All proceeds go directly to cover the

costs of the trip, which include medication (around \$6,000), transportation costs and paying the local nursing staff a stipend.

"It costs about \$1 to treat one person over there, so a simple donation of \$20 goes a long way — it will help treat 20 different people, who otherwise may not receive treatment," Wolters said.

The medication used for treatment is purchased by CNFA in Africa, rather than North America, for several reasons, she says — including that it's simply cheaper.

"Money goes way further there. It's also easier because we're not transporting them across borders with planes and whatnot," said Wolters. "Also, our philosophy is to help out the local economy whenever we have an opportunity."

One of the major challenges the group faces concerning the purchase of proper medications is with respect to knock-off drugs that are exported out of China and India.

"It was a challenge finding reliable pharmacists that we could trust, but we have managed to do that," said Wolters.

That's thanks to Mulamba.

"He's got all the contacts on the ground in Kenya, so he helps with all of that," Wolters said. "We also work with Kenya medical offices and nurses and they do help us with that as well."

For more information on the gala or to order tickets, call 416-618-0430.

Wolters says donations to the organization can also be made by contacting her through e-mail at canadiannursesforafrica@gmail.ca, or by mail to Canadian Nurses for Africa, 649 Maclaren Dr., Burlington, ON, L7N 2Z4.

All donations go directly to support the medical missions and tax receipts will be provided.

For more information on CNFA, visit www.canadiannursesforafrica.blogspot.com.

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