

Global Missions!

A Letter from Dr. Jim Brown

Dear Friends,

One of the most difficult aspects of working in rural Africa is the daily infinite needs we see. Almost no one has health insurance, and most people have very few savings. Yet they must pay cash for health care. The hospital charges for its services. The fees are very reasonable, far below what other health care systems in the country charge. And yet still many of our patients cannot afford their care. Young families with few assets are especially hit hard when faced with medical expenses.

Lilian is a young woman 34 years old with 4 children and a non-present husband. She developed rectal cancer and recently had a major operation to remove the tumor and create a permanent colostomy. Her pathology report indicates that the tumor had spread to her lymph nodes. Even though we removed all the cancer we could see, we know that statistically she has a very high likelihood of developing recurrent disease. Post operative radiation and chemotherapy would lower that likelihood significantly. Her mother sold a piece of land to help pay Lilian's hospital bill, but Lilian still owes a large debt and could never afford more care without someone to help her. I spoke with an oncologist in Douala who told me that the combined radiation and chemotherapy would cost 500,000 Cameroonian Francs, or about \$1000.

Carolyn and I are able to obtain money from a Benevolent Fund established through our sending mission, Reach Global. We use this fund to help patients with hospital bills, or other needs such as medication, diagnostic studies, prostheses, and sometimes food and transport. We do not give money to patients directly, but as anonymous donors through the hospital social workers and chaplains. We are accountable to Reach Global for every use of this fund.

The fund is sustained by donations from individuals such as yourselves and given only to patients we know personally. If you would like to give to this fund, you can do so in one of the following ways: Send a check made out to EFCA, but in the memo line write "RG African Benevolent Fund- Account # 42200-5426". Mail it to: Reach Global, 901 East 78th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55420-1300. You may also go on line at www.efca.org/reachglobal/give and follow the prompts to make a donation to the same fund listed above. You will receive a receipt for tax purposes for your donation.

Unfortunately, Lilian's story is only one of hundreds of patients similar stories.

If you have any questions please write. We have a million stories.

Thanks so much.

Jim

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Please note that I have changed my primary email account to jimbrownjab@gmail.com.