

Nicci's Update from Uganda – January 2019

Dear family and friends

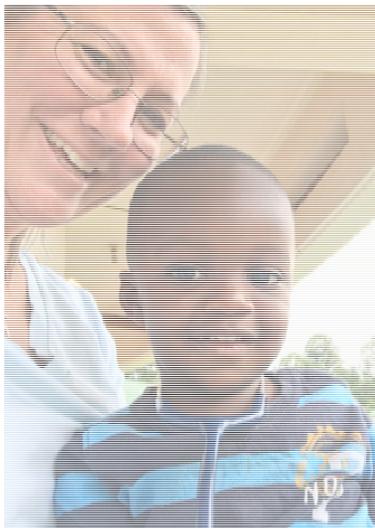
Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and that 2019 has many blessings in store for you! I'm sorry it's a little later than usual this month, but here's my latest news...

Workwise – Although outpatients has continued to be quieter than in previous years, we have seen quite a few very sick patients and the ward has filled up, especially over Christmas. The main problems are pneumonia and gastroenteritis although we have had a steady trickle of patients with other serious illnesses. Kisoro is full of visitors from Kampala over the Christmas period so we have seen lots of children from out of town too! The special care baby unit continues to be overfull and we have had some very challenging babies to look after. It has been a real joy watching some incredibly sick babies and children steadily improve and go home, often despite our expectations!

Equipment remains a challenge – especially oxygen concentrators. The Friends of Potter's Village kindly bought us a new concentrator but after nearly of month of waiting for it to arrive, sadly it was damaged in transit so we can't use it yet! Hopefully it will be replaced with a working one after the Christmas holidays and parts for some other machines will hopefully arrive toward the end of January too.

I am still really enjoying my Tuesdays at the government hospital and I feel I am beginning to build some good relationships with the staff there. In recent weeks we have admitted several babies at Potter's who appear to have had very poor initial care in some of the smaller health centres around the district. I am hoping to try to visit some of these health centres to see if there is any support we can offer in terms of either skills training or basic resuscitation equipment.

Management/admin continues to distract me! There are just so many things to do to keep Potter's Village ticking over and I seem to be dragged into all of them! It is incredibly difficult to say no! Please pray for a new administrator to be appointed soon!



A moment with one of our crisis centre children.

Christmas – I was working 24/7 over Christmas and New Year as Daniel was away visiting his family in Kampala. (I'm exhausted!) I wasn't able to get to church on Christmas Day because of a very full and busy ward and special care but managed to get away from the medical centre for a few hours on Christmas Eve to enjoy a German celebration with the Rottmann family and again escaped for a couple of hours on the evening of Christmas Day for an American Christmas dinner with the Johnsons.

Time off – There hasn't been much free time in December but I managed another day trip to Mbarara to finalise my Ugandan driving permit and it was delivered to me on Christmas Eve (by my friend Hosea wearing a Santa outfit because....why not?!?).

Looking ahead – we are expecting lots and lots of visitors to Potter's in the next few months. The first visit of note is from the trustees of the Friends of Potter's Village, our main source of funding, who will be visiting in late January to see how things are going here.

Keeping in touch – So many of you sent electronic Christmas greetings – thank you! If you have sent a message to say that I should expect something in the post for Christmas, sadly, absolutely nothing had arrived by Christmas Day! But a big thank you anyway! I'm looking forward to an extended Christmas in January (and possibly February too!) when everything eventually arrives. My blog (niccimaxwell.wordpress.com) was read by almost 1000 people in 22 countries in 2018 which is wonderful – thanks for keeping in touch!

Until next month, love to you all,

Nicci

For your prayers

Give thanks for:

- the chance to celebrate Christmas despite the busyness
- the work of the medical centre which has allowed some very sick children to get better
- a new tenant for my house in Plymouth who moved in just a few days before Christmas and who has paid 6 months' rent in advance! Answered prayers!

Please pray for:

- a new administrator for Potter's Village – a person with the faith, vision and integrity to take the project forward
- the visit of the Friends of Potter's Village trustees in January
- my planned visits to some smaller health centres who seem to be struggling to manage small or sick babies well
- the ability to balance my work and rest, even when there seems to be too much to do