



31 December 2020

Dear Everyone

Over the next few weeks you're going to hear mention of the support the Clinical Team receives from the Jabulani Rural Health Foundation in various ways. One of the most important cadre of employees is called Clinical Team Assistants. (Some Old Timers may still refer to them as Translators – their initial beginnings – but they now have a much wider support role.)

As you may already know, or could guess, most of the funding for the 20 staff who currently work directly with the hospital comes from outside sources. This goes primarily towards staff working in the HIV and TB programmes. (Depending on grant income, it doesn't completely cover the counsellors.)

The CTAs, on the other hand, have been funded entirely by the clinical staff. Their presence makes a direct contribution to our own experience of the working environment, including to those who don't need translation assistance, as they play a big part in facilitating the smooth operation of each department. The exact responsibilities they carry other than translating for those who need it, vary according to department. The ultimate benefit, of course, is to the patients and community, who get a more efficient service, and to the CTAs, who are employed.

We want this model of support to be as sustainable as possible, but of necessity have to review its viability every year as staff come and go. We realise that there are significant demands on everyone's finances, but hope that we can continue the ethos of contributing to others in this way. We also want people to contribute an amount that reflects the space you work in, as well as your salary, although this is challenging given the relative sizes of each department and the help they need.

**Now for the numbers**

From 1 January 2019 the minimum wage increased substantially. We previously tried to pay above the minimum wage and managed this (by a little) but we had to contribute more as a result. (As our CTAs are formally employed by Jabulani, the NGO is compelled to adhere to minimum wage legislation and of course, a living wage is a moral issue too.) This has implications for how much we need to contribute.

Cath Young from Jabulani and I have sat and done the maths. Out of the 21 Jabulani staff whose work supports the hospital, 11 are completely reliant on the clinical team for their salaries. In 2020 we found we could NOT sustain this and managed to get a small amount of outside funding too, but in essence, if we want to keep going with the CTA programme, we need to be prepared to contribute. The following levels will keep the programme solvent through the end of 2021.

Discipline	CTAs directly helping	Monthly contribution
Doctors	5	R1600
Therapy (OT & PT)	4	R1250
Pharmacy	1	R1400

For transparency, the doctors help subsidise a CTA allocated to Therapy (which indirectly helps them too, of course!)

These calculations are based on an “almost everyone in” scenario. If that is not going to be the case (and this is an individual choice we cannot and do not want to force on anyone), we will have to relook at it and see if we can still afford everyone.

### **Way forward**

I am sensitive to the variety of views and people’s different financial positions. Having mentioned it at orientation, the next step is this letter, to give you a chance to think over with some more details. Please feel free to discuss with me individually. Please let me know by Monday 11 January where you stand.

If you are able to contribute, we ask that you sign a commitment form so that Jabulani has something concrete against which to budget, as they have an obligation to their auditors and other funders to plan responsibly.

### **Some technical details**

Just so I don’t have to repeat them later, when you give, please deposit the money into Jabulani’s account (a stop order is the best way to do this regularly):

Account name: Jabulani Rural Health Foundation

Bank name: ABSA

Branch: Frère Square, East London

Branch code: 632005

Account no: 4069520005

Please use HOSPSALARY or CTA and YOUR NAME as a reference.

***Remember that all contributions towards this programme are tax deductible so a tax certificate will be issued at the end of the financial year and you’ll qualify for a refund from SARS that is roughly the equivalent of your marginal tax rate on the amount. E.g. doctors, you’ll get over 40% back!***

### **Patient transport assistance fund**

Lastly, a number of you have contributed to the Patient Transport Assistance Fund in the past. This helps assist patients in dire need, especially with transport to come to appointments that are important for their health but which they can’t afford. We spend over R2000 a month (sometimes more!) in this way. If you would like to contribute in this way, please deposit as above, but indicate PTAF as the reference plus YOUR NAME. If you prefer this component of your giving to be anonymous, but would still like a tax certificate, please let me know (I’ll be the only one) and I will allocate you an anonymous donor number so that we can reconcile them at the end of the financial year as these donations are also tax deductible.

This is a tricky letter to write as no-one is obligated to spend their hard earned cash in this way. Nonetheless, your willingness to do this makes a huge contribution to both the work here and many people’s lives. It is much appreciated!

I look forward to our discussions.

Thanks everyone!!

Regards

Ben

PS I have appended the CTA job description and the Commitment Form

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Job Description for Clinical Team Assistants**

#### **Overview of Clinical Team Assistant:**

The Clinical Team Assistants (CTA) provide a key link between clinical professionals and patients and are therefore essential to the smooth and efficient running of the hospital's clinical services. The main role of the CTAs is to succinctly and accurately convey what the patient is saying to the clinical professional and vice versa. However, there are additional aspects to the role that vary according to what department the CTA are placed in.

#### **Working week:**

Monday to Thursday: 09:00 – 17:00

Friday: 09:00 – 13:00

#### **Work responsibilities for ALL Clinical Team Assistants:**

- Translate when a clinical professional is communicating with a patient (from English to Xhosa)
- Translate when a patient is communicating with a clinical professional (from Xhosa to English)

#### **Responsibilities if allocated to Outpatient Department:**

- Liaise with the desk clerks regarding patient paperwork
- Together with the nurses and doctors, ensure that the consulting room is stocked (stationery and consumables) and presentable at all times
- Assist with the organisation of sleepovers who have spent the night in OPD
- Assist with the following clinical assessments/techniques, once suitably trained by a clinical professional:
  - Peak flow measurement
  - ECG
  - Inhaler techniques
  - Basic CPR – chest compressions
  - Preparing sterile trays

#### **Responsibilities if allocated to Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy:**

- Assist therapists with handling of patients and patient personal care when required
- Assist with collecting ward equipment
- Assist with the issuing of crutches and walking frames
- Assist with taking and collecting laundry
- Assist with office administration – data sheet filing, mobile phone statistics capturing, photocopying
- Assist with patient groups
- Assist with the cleaning of the paediatric corner and toys in the department
- Assist with making and changing club foot plaster of paris casts (once suitably trained by a clinical professional)

#### **Responsibilities if allocated to Dietetics:**

- Assist with prepacking diabetic medication for the clinics

- Assist with office administration including data capturing, statistics, photocopying
- Assist with breastfeeding education and teaching, as well as breast massage
- Assist with taking weight and height measurements
- Assist with group education
- Assist with creating information pamphlets and posters

**Responsibilities if allocated to the Speech and Audiology Department:**

- Assist with patient groups
- Assist with photocopying and data capture
- Assist with reading days in the Paediatrics Department

**Out of scope of practice – not to be done by any Clinical Team Assistant**

- No clinical technique, assessment, measurement or procedure if training has not been completed
- No working independently with a patient, aside from getting a subjective history during a consultation with a clinical professional
- No providing education or advice that is not relayed directly by the clinical professional (ideas of information that could be added can first be shared with the clinician in order to assess the suitability of the information)

## CONTRIBUTION COMMITMENT FORM

### CLINICAL TEAM ASSISTANTS (including ARV COUNSELLORS etc)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick to indicate your level of commitment:

- Doctor – R1600 per month
- Pharmacist – R1400 per month
- Therapist – R1250 per month

I understand that my commitment is voluntary, but that financial and employment decisions are based thereon. Should I plan to stop contributing, I will let Jabulani know with at least one month's notice.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_