



## Email from Valerie Archer 28<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Valerie is the missionary doctor at Kapuna Hospital in the coastal swamplands of Gulf Province, Papua New Guinea. She also has responsibilities for Kikori Hospital, several hours through the delta by boat from Kapuna.



Hello, all at Welcome Bay and Carmel Community Churches.

Thank you for your ongoing financial support. \$100 per month doesn't sound much in NZ, but it translates to about K210 (210 Kina) and goes a long way in Papua New Guinea. This little fund is what I consider "my special" money and I use it for "my special" personal projects. For a while I used it to help fund postgraduate courses for nurses.

Nurses in PNG are very different from nurses in NZ. Nurses here are actually mini doctors and are expected to run the rural health services. The best equivalent in NZ would be senior practice nurses who are so experienced that they can prescribe on their own and do things like lancing boils and suturing cuts. Straight after they graduate, PNG nurses are expected to be able to function on their own – deliver babies, suture, set bones, etc. So we run extra training for them to help them fit into the role.

Recently one of the politicians and Total Oil Company have been helping me to fund the nurses' program. So I have turned my "special" account towards another of my "special" projects, which is Tuberculosis. TB is probably the biggest single killer in our area. Interestingly, if you read English history, in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries it was probably the biggest killer in England, too.

I have two projects. One is to train village volunteers to find people with TB in the villages and send them for treatment. The other is to offer an *incentive* for patients to complete the treatment.

Completing treatment is a big challenge for most of our Delta people because they live in widely scattered communities. So I have chosen the sputum positive people – that is, the people most likely to pass



TB on to others – and we give them a monetary incentive to return to hospital to show they have completed their treatment. Some people do not agree with monetary incentives, but it works very well. The amount given is equivalent to what it would cost for travel to return for their follow-up. So those are my medical projects at the moment.

I have just come across another project that I also want to invest in, in the near future. There are Christian teaching books being written especially for PNG by the author, Dr Rosie Crowther (you can Google her). Her books are so excellent for PNG. We have been using one for our studies recently. It is "Do not Fear". Fears of sorcery and magic are enormous; Satan really has people afraid of him in PNG. I have ordered a catalogue and will be making a big one-off order for our library and for the nurses' teaching programme. So next month's Christmas donation will go towards that. But then it will be: back to TB.

Love to you all. Thank you for your support. One day AC (after Covid) I will see you again.

Blessings,

*Valerie*