

# Winter Report 2010

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to  
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europe



A Ray of Hope

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## Some Notes On 2010

2010 was a very busy year, as indeed have been the past few years. The work of cr2ee increases year on year but we have achieved a great deal.

In this newsletter you can read an account of one of the nurses who came to Moldova in November accompanied by a colleague, Mel and two doctors, Dr Jill and Dr John. Unfortunately we were not able to print the report written by Mel due to the space available.

The last two Newsletters have had a medical theme and we felt you may wish to have an update on some of our other activities, of which there are many.

**School Uniform Appeal.** You may recall when the last newsletter was sent out we made an appeal for school uniforms. These are so cheap in England and children's clothes so expensive in Moldova. We were delighted and amazed by the response. We must try again and continue to give school uniforms to the children.

It is impossible to describe our feelings when seeing the excitement on the children's faces when they saw the school uniforms, the majority of which were new uniforms. Seriously it would bring tears to the eyes of the most hardened person.



These uniforms were distributed at orphanages, soup kitchens and schools and also given to poor families. What a difference they made, they looked so very smart. For the first time the children in the



orphanage looked smarter than the staff! The children in Moldova always look so healthy and everyone in Moldova spends a lot of time trying to look good wearing the best clothes they can. Their looks hide the reality of their life many living in such grinding poverty. I don't think I will ever forget seeing the children leaving the school in Macareuca skipping down the road, holding the hems of the new dresses they were wearing. Such happiness over a gingham dress.

**Soup Kitchens.** We run various Soup Kitchens in several regions in Moldova. These photos are of children attending the one in the south of the country in the Cahul district.



**Accident disaster.** A young girl, Violetta comes to our soup kitchen in Cahul.

When she was about five she was hit by a car. The family had no money for good medical help and the driver didn't care. The result was Violetta had minimal medical help and now has no feeling in her left arm, (albeit



she can move it), limited feeling in her legs and has very bad hearing and speech. Violetta, now 14, (we think, but she does not know when her birthday is), is allowed to attend school but is not taught as they have no facilities for children with hearing problems. She does not attend class with her peers but looks after the younger ones and does jobs in the school. She proudly told me she can peel potatoes and milk a cow with one hand! What future awaits her? In Europe's poorest country, who would marry a girl with no education and such disabilities? She is a lovely girl, a delight to be with but what lies ahead?

**Orphan neglect.** We were told of a young lad who had his leg amputated and needed a prosthetic leg. Apparently in the orphanage he was playing and fell and injured his leg. An orphan has no money and in the same way as Violetta, he received only basic and bad medical attention from the doctors, (in theory medical help for children is free but not in reality).



Gangrene set in but medical help was slow and disinterested. They eventually amputated his leg, but it was too late, the gangrene had spread and he died. He was just 17. But apart from his sister, who cares? After all, he was only an orphan! We care but we arrived too late to help.

**Moldovan Generosity.** Mother Drab has been helping us distribute money and aid in the villages to the north of Balti for many years. She is a loving and caring lady who lives in a very modest house, cannot afford a horse and cart let alone a car. As the mother of a hard working family she recently built a Poly tunnel in her garden to grow vegetables out of season. When we visited her she said she would like to give us some vegetables to give to the poor families in the city, Balti. This she could ill afford. She was very keen to share her harvest so we agreed. To our amazement she returned with eight full sacks of cabbages, boxes of fresh cucumbers, tomatoes etc.

**Cabbage delight.** We were very pleased to be able to take this produce and headed for the city. All the families were so grateful to receive fresh vegetables. Normally they would not be able to afford such food.

in the UK would show such excitement as the Nichporet from Balti. It is so humbling to see children so genuinely thrilled to be given four cabbages, some cucumbers and tomatoes.



**Old and alone.** We talk a lot about the plight of children and mention the difficulties old people have but to date we have not mentioned the situation of the



elderly who have no families to care for them. What happens to them?



The excitement of a cabbage and delight of a cucumber. How many young children



For so many old age is a thing to be feared.

For those with no family not only the loneliness and isolation of living alone, especially in the country, but the fear of what will happen. Without family, who will care for them? Who will grow food for them? How can they gather the wood for the fire? How will they survive? With bitterly cold winters and baking summers

there are tough times ahead; frightening for many; their only companion, a lifetime of memories.

The lucky ones go to an Old People's asylum. One we have supported is in the village of Gribova in the north of Moldova. The nurse, Catherine mentions this in her report later in this newsletter.

On a lighter note, school photographs in Moldova are quite unusual. The faces of the children are placed on photographs, for the girls, photos of Princesses or ladies of wealth whilst the boys' faces are put on Army personnel.



Our Christmas Shoebox appeal was again a great success. Despite the grim economic climate in the UK people found it in their hearts to make up some wonderful gifts for the children, (and grannies). The joy on children's faces sometimes surpassed by the joy on mother's or father's face is priceless.



These are District Nurse Catherine Petherick's notes following the medical mission in November 2010. Cath is a district nurse in Devon and with a colleague, Mel, accompanied Hugh and two doctors, Dr Jill and Dr John on a medical mission to Moldova. Cath's report reads:-

## MOLDOVA NOVEMBER 2010

### The Edited Highlights!

When an email arrived asking if anyone was interested in travelling out to Moldova with Hugh, Dr John Perkins and Dr Jill Asher as part of a medical mission to Moldova, my heart was in my mouth. It was something I had always wanted to do, but somehow not got around to (three children and a job sort of got in the way!) My family have supported the charity for nine years so I had read the newsletters and felt I had an idea what to expect, (see later!)

The Devon PCT agreed two of us could go on a medical mission during work-time which was wonderful. Mel and I have worked together for several years and are good friends, so we were delighted to be going. Our mission was to make an assessment of nursing practice there, to build on the good relationship that Dr John was working on to establish with the doctors and nurse out there, and to teach some skills to help heal venous leg ulcers. We left Exeter at 11pm on Saturday evening to catch the 6am flight out of Heathrow the following day. By the time we got to Moldova I had been up for 36hrs and was feeling a little odd!

As Hugh drove us away from the airport through the capital city, Chisinau, my first impressions were of a grey dilapidated country. Big blocks of flats looked decaying, communal ground was like wasteland and the people looked downtrodden. We then drove on out into the countryside,



towards Gura Bicului, passing horse drawn carts and dodging potholes that would have prompted furious letters to the local paper everywhere. It seemed impossible to drive in a straight line because of them. We saw the Moscow train, ancient and very very slow! On the journey I talked to Liuba, our lovely translator, and began to get a picture of the difficulties of life here; having “free” schools where a payment was needed to attend, payment needed to pass exams and children had to provide their own paper, pens and materials. Clothes are more expensive in Moldova than in England and food in the shops is often too expensive for people to buy. I am ashamed to say that there was a bit of me saying, “Help, I don’t want to be here. Take me home.”

The country felt like a cross between medieval times and post apocalypse; crumbling Soviet buildings surrounded by horses and carts and exhausted looking people.

We arrived at Gura Bicului, a village about an hour from Chisinau, to the home of Ion and Diana, an inspirational young couple, who managed to accommodate and feed all

six of us despite having two small children. They are incredible people, well educated and devoted to helping their country. They have chosen to stay in Moldova and try to make a difference when they could easily leave and join their families abroad. They are the driving force behind the community centre which the charity is funding. The aim of the centre is to provide a bakery, refuge, washing facilities and health education and care for the village. It is envisaged that the local people will be employed there, giving them a focus aside from the daily grind to survive here. It is a modern, bright and airy building.

No sooner had we arrived we were straight off out again to visit the home of Natalia, one of the local nurses who Diana had suggested could be a good link for us. We had a superb meal, putting paid to my concern that I may get hungry in Moldova!



Dr Alex, a local family doctor, attended too. He is a friendly doctor who appeared to have a good relationship with his patients. He had just been selling his cabbages! His hands were those of a man who worked the land, as everyone must in order to eat. Not your average English GP lifestyle.

Next day was time for work. We headed off to the Polyclinic, an old Soviet built hospital, cold, in disrepair with two holes in

the ground for toilets, one minus a door! Natalia had a small queue of patients waiting to see her. Her clinic room was shared with another doctor. There is no water at the clinic, water is collected from a well. No computers, baby scales circa 1920, glass thermometers in jam jars, shelves of paper notes. Such a contrast to our modern, warm surgery with machines that beep everywhere.



We had a tour of the clinic, seeing a UV machine for soothing sore throats, a massage machine and the dentist, who appeared to be doing root canal surgery with family and us in the room. No anaesthetic as far as I could see. The Moldovans are a tough lot. I was surprised by the subservient attitude of the people, they seemed to accept that the nurse or doctor was in charge, did not ask questions and seemed not to believe that they could influence their care in any way. Doctors will often prescribe a long list of drugs for simple ailments, all of which the patient needs to pay for and many of which may not be needed. No evidence based practice here.

Mel and I spent the afternoon teaching Natalia and Alex how to assess circulation in the leg and apply compression bandaging to heal leg ulcers. They were truly interested and very quick to learn.

We managed to get the cleaners legs assessed! She treated us to a little party in her room with her homemade wine and preserved peppers! I was fast seeing what friendly, welcoming people they are in this country. Laughing and hugging despite all their problems.

After another splendid meal courtesy of Diana, we were off out to visit a family in a nearby village. They are poor people with six children. Their eldest daughter had a disfiguring birthmark which would have meant that it would have been difficult for her to marry. The charity has paid for her to come to England and have it removed. They lived in a tiny house, two rooms with a stove for burning wood for heat. The children's bed was above this stove and against the wall for heat in winter, all the family piled in together. The family had laid on lots of food for us again, and plied us with wine. We were not able to eat most of the food and I worried that it would all be wasted, but Hugh assured me that once we had gone the children would descend like a cloud of locusts.

The children were delighted and excited to see Hugh, who has a wonderful way



with them. The mother was so welcoming but started to tell us of her worries. She gets up at 4am to work in the polytunnels

until noon, then back to work again at 4pm til 8pm, in searing temperatures, 60-65 degrees in the summer.

She was upset and tearful because the children wanted clothes, she had nothing for herself or them. The husband looked a dreadful colour, grey and bent. I was shocked to find they were only in their early 40's. Their youngest daughter, aged six, was so tiny and light, with a pinched look to her face. Surely malnourished.



Six year old Alena sitting on Hugh's hand.

Suddenly we were off with all the family to the village dancing celebrations, the annual village day! A local band was playing, lots of dancing, lots of drunken men! Every time I decided to have a break from dancing I was whisked back on with someone else! Alcohol is a huge problem here, everyone seems to make their own and there is little else to do.

Next day Mel and I were off visiting families with Natalia, trying to get an impression of how a Moldovan nurse works. Her role seems much more diverse than ours, health visitor, nurse, social worker all rolled into one. Record keeping does not seem to come into it.

We saw several mothers with their babies, one very young looking mother in a shed of a house with an old iron cot that had been mended with bits of wood. We were



pressure machine and stethoscope. She is in desperate need of some baby scales. We were amused at how glamorously dressed she was, no uniform here! Amazing how she does it with only a well and an outside toilet ie. hole in the ground. She walks everywhere, occasionally using a bicycle. We were extremely lucky on our visit as the weather was warm and dry, but usually Moldova is a sea of mud, no tarmac in the villages.

able to give her some new baby clothes. We visited a lady with hypertension which is a massive problem here. People are unable to afford to buy drugs for long term conditions. Everyone seemed very accepting of these strange foreign nurses visiting them! I tried to establish whether there is a programme for monitoring patients but there does not seem to be. Natalia knows her patients well and seems

Diana took us to visit a family in Gura Bicului, a very a sad family. The mother is an alcoholic, father has disappeared, as is so common here. There are four children at home. We saw the youngest two, Michael age twelve and Iuliana, nine.

When we arrived they were making a fire at the side of the road, cooking potatoes on it. Lunch? They took us into their home, I use the term "home" in the loosest sense of the word. In truth, an absolute hovel. Filthy, a sack of old potatoes and a few rotting vegetables lying around, a filthy cooker and a very small hopeless looking stove for heat in the winter. It looked appalling on a bright, warm and dry day, I can only begin to imagine it in the depths of winter.



*The medical team, "strange Nurses" Catherine and Mel front left, Natalia front right. Rear, right to left, Dr Alex, Dr John, Diana and Dr Jill with a patient.*

As the mother is an alcoholic, I doubt she will have collected any food or fuel to keep her children warm and fed in the winter. Michael proudly showed me the bedroom. Again filthy. No glass in the window, horrifying looking electrics and an old tape recorder which he was so keen to show me. Not a tape in sight. On top of the wardrobe was a battered old shoebox covered in wrapping paper. I felt incredibly moved to see it there. It could have been one of the ones that I had made up with my children in our warm, loving family home. I had no idea of the utter squalor

to hold information in her head. She is kind and caring but has so little equipment. In England we carry around bags of dressings and other useful things. Patients there have to buy their own dressings, so I suspect they don't bother to dress many of their wounds, so risking infection and suffering unnecessary pain. I gave her my blood

that some of the children receiving them were living in.

Iuliana was crawling with head lice. There is no way that her mother will sort that out for her. She is a pretty, smiley, bright looking child who could have such a different life elsewhere. It is these children that the charity hope will benefit so much from the new centre, being able to go there after school, have a meal, do their schoolwork and have a shower before returning home for the night.

As we walked through the village we saw queues of people waiting for food parcels which one of the political parties was



distributing to the elderly prior to the election. The previous day a different party had supplied barrels of wine. The election is very soon. It was interesting that we were being asked if we were anything to do with the election when we arrived at someone's house with our Western medical ways.

We set off that evening to travel north to Baronea to stay in the village with Mother Drab. Well, the journey of a lifetime. three cars, one impromptu tea party, one translator (the wonderful Mariana), several extremely helpful Moldovans and approx six hours later we were there. In bed by

about 3 am. Hope we sleep well. Ha ha ha. Hugh snores like a Richter 10 earthquake! I was surprised to see that the house was still standing in the morning!

Life in the villages is tough survival. Everyone has a little bit of land with their house. They grow fruit and vegetables on it, keep chickens, geese, dogs and anything else they can afford. They harvest their crops throughout the year, preserving, bottling and storing for the winter, they collect their own firewood.

If you are lucky you may have a cow. There is no running water, wells are dotted around. Toilets are a hole in the ground, often with falling down wooden walls. The posh families may have a horse and cart. Washing is done in bowls by hand. I have no idea how that happens during the bitter winter months; I suspect it just cannot.

The organised family just about scrapes by, but as alcohol is such a huge problem many people are unable to prepare adequately. If there is a poor harvest, you are hungry. Diet is largely carbohydrate so people are lacking in vital protein and vitamins. Well water may not be drinkable.

Mother Drab took us on several visits, one to an old people's home. They were so delighted to see us. It was humbling. The

r e s i d e n t s here have no families to care for them. They are lonely and just have a bed, no communal area. The staff were caring and dedicated to





their work but they had no water, having to fetch every drop from a well. They have to walk through some woodland, climb under a low fence, through someone's garden to the well and then return laden with heavy buckets full of water. Hugh is hoping the charity will provide the money



for a well to be dug outside the home. We had hoped it was negotiated on our visit but oddly enough next day the price had doubled overnight as the subsoil has a lot of rock in it. The toilet facilities were dire. One lady told me she was lonely and had no one in the world. They do not even have a radio. Despite the dreadful conditions we were very impressed with the care they received. The staff reported there were no pressure sores or major health concerns. Next was a lady who has had a stroke. She believes that she had a spell put on her. It happened about 27 years ago, when she

was in her 20's. She is now so contracted up that she is unable to move at all and is fixed in a very contorted position. She has a wheelchair which her son lifts her into, that must be extremely difficult. Her son cares for her and has done for all these years. Regrettably he has alcohol problems and we noticed they were both bruised. Domestic violence is common



here. There is no social care available and this lady must have been lying in her bed for much of the past 27 years with no stimulation or contact with the outside world. She said they were not prepared for the winter. We were able to give her son a good winter fleece.

Off to another village, a more remote village, to see a family with three children. They had been complaining of headaches and feeling unwell. The house was boiling hot with the stove going. In this oppressive atmosphere within ten minutes we also had headaches and felt unwell too! But a local doctor had diagnosed the children with intracranial pressure, a common diagnosis here, often treated with magnesium infusions. We have been unable to establish what is meant by this diagnosis. It seemed to us that the children were pretty healthy but mother was somewhat unimpressed with this observation.

Granny over the road called me in to see her. She had sciatica and probably some

degree of osteoporosis and arthritis. She laughed, hugged me and told me the only



cure was the coffin! She then asked me if we had had a good harvest in England. I realised that I had no idea about our harvest and even if we had a bad one, I would probably be unaware. What a difference to her life.

We drove to Balti to visit Vova, a nine-year-old boy who several years ago, with the support of CR2EE, had surgery for a hole in the heart. He was looking much better than when Hugh and John first met him but still

not cured. Vova has no father at home and his mother was crying and very low in



mood. She is so worried for her son and has no money for fuel or the doctor. She was clearly very depressed and afraid. So would I be. We spent some time with her talking and comforting and left her some money.

That night we stayed in Balti with Ilia and Maria who are very involved with the charity, helping families, distributing aid etc. I have been so touched by the generous hospitality of everyone here. We turn up at some hideous hour but they welcomed us with a smile, a meal and a bed every time.

Next morning we visited Sveta's family. They have been supported by the charity for several years. They moved from Kazakhstan with no papers and so unable to legitimately work. Needless to say, they are extremely poor. Sveta has TB and has had treatment in Russia. She was clearly very unwell again and painfully thin with no appetite. Her brother, Robert, is also tiny for his age, nineteen. When he was young he played his guitar by lying it flat on the floor as he was so small. Sadly we did not have time for a recital to see if he still has this strange technique. We were not able to establish what tests he has had, but possibly has some malabsorption problem. He gratefully accepted all our snacks.

Off again, south to return to Gura Bicului! We were delighted that Natalia had found us a patient with a "perfect" leg ulcer! We were able to assess and bandage this man. He has had his wound for fifteen years. I know that at home we would be able to sort it out for him in a few weeks.

Natalia and Alex were very keen to see what we were doing and we were extremely impressed with Natalia's quick learning and skilled approach. Mel and I were very hopeful that she will continue the good work when we are gone.

We plan to keep in regular contact, help her with some equipment that she needs and visit again. It is hoped that she will cascade her new skills to the other nurses there. As we were walking home people were coming out of their homes to tell us about their leg problems! There is clearly a need there.

On Friday morning we travelled west to Losova towards the Romanian border where we were to meet Artium and his parents, Vasile and Sylvia. All the family are hard working, honest family doctors.

Artium had planned to be a family doctor and was a first class student. He has passed all his exams with flying colours, which unfortunately for him has meant that he has been told to work for the Ministry of Health! No choice here. He is working there in Chisinau during the week, and then with his parents in Losova at the weekend.

We visited patients with them, demonstrating how the English nurses work. It was difficult to show them exactly as we have so many resources here that are lacking in Moldova. However one thing that really astounded them was that we involve the patient in our consultations,



kneeling down to them and touching them. There is a far more formal approach in Moldova. Again we were struck by the lack of record keeping and monitoring. Artium told us that the nurses who work for his father often don't bother to visit the patients!

After more wonderful food, all from their self sufficient garden we were off with Sylvia in the dark. I gave Artium my wind up torch, he was absolutely delighted! One couple we saw were slightly drunk.

Their home was dilapidated and one bed was full of chickens! The only food there was a loaf of bread, but there were many jars of wine and the yard was full of trodden grapes. I wondered how on earth they survived.

We saw a family whose daughter was epileptic. I noticed their supper was a bowl of cold macaroni and a bowl of beetroot. No protein at all. We saw several other families, mostly very poor and living in tough conditions, all in need of help. We hope the charity will be able to assist some of them.

Artium is very keen to develop medical links with Dr John, Dr Jill and ourselves. I felt he and his parents really did care about trying to improve the lot of their people. They told us that sometimes they will get thirty calls a night from patients and will have to visit many of them.

As we drove back to Gura Bicului we passed through Chisinau, the capital again. So few lights, only a few seedy looking bars and many, many Soviet built tower blocks some with no water, sewage or heating. Families are surviving in these shells in minus 20 degrees during the winter. The "town heating" costs a month's wages so few can afford it. It felt so depressing.

Finally it was Saturday again, time to return home to England. I felt as if we had been away for years not days.

Before leaving we visited our chap with the leg ulcer. It was already showing signs of improvement. We met with Natalia and Dr Alex to debrief about the week. They seemed to have really enjoyed it. I know that I had been really nervous before we went, and Natalia had too but Mel and I felt we had all learnt so much from each other. I was genuinely impressed at Natalia's dedication to her patients and

her desire to learn. There are so many health issues to tackle, this is just a very small start. We hope that by sharing our knowledge and skills and making a small difference to a few lives, we can gain some credence and help further. There is a huge need for health education. We really hope we may continue to work together to help the Moldovan people.

My lasting impressions are those of great admiration and sorrow for these people who have suffered so much and continue to do so. They are hard working, tough and so generous. Even when they have so little they invite you into their home and share

what they have. I have never seen such abject misery and poverty, alongside such corruption and fear of the authorities. This is a land where stealing some shoes so that you can walk your child to the hospital will land you in prison, but also where a family with nothing will lay on a tableful of food to welcome you to their home. They need us to help them so much. As our plane circled over London, I looked down at the vibrant city, the O2 Arena and the Wembley Stadium, contrasting it with the few dull lights of night time Chisinau and thought of Mariana's words, " Please, please don't forget us".

## The Centre in Gura Bicului

What an exciting project this is. The number of people we can help is huge and the way they can be benefited is wide. There is so much to do and we are so very close to completion. With the falling value of Sterling and inflation in Moldova



it has become necessary to raise more money to complete this. We have detailed in previous Newsletters some of the activities and services we will be able to provide at the Centre for the needy in Gura Bicului and the surrounding villages. A summary of which, in no particular order is:-

**Soup Kitchen** - for young and old, basically the vulnerable.

**Educational facilities** - we will have computers, paper, pens etc making a homework centre for children

**Adult education** - covering everything from reading and writing to computer studies.

**Employment** - We already employ people on our farm and hope to expand this by providing the centre with the harvest from the fields, milk and meat from the animals.

We will need to employ a variety of people from cleaners, cooks etc, to teachers and carers.

Sadly, if a person has a disability it is almost impossible for them to find work, for most it is totally impossible. We hope to show that people with a disability can make a valuable contribution and be very much an asset and not a liability.

**A Bakery** Making and selling bread generating income to enable bread to be given to the very poor. Baking of other cakes and pies, again to generate income to fund the centre on an ongoing basis.

**Recreational activities** including an affordable restaurant, there are no real places to go for a social cup of coffee, meal etc. We intend to have an affordable warm and welcoming café where people can come.

**Cinema** - We hope to show films etc using a data projector DVD to provide some entertainment in a social environment.

**A safe play area** for children.

**Kindergarten/toddler group**

**A shelter** and training facilities for children leaving orphanages.

A “**Safe House**” aimed at children and/or mothers who suffer abuse caused by alcohol abuse, a big problem in Moldova.

**Medical Centre**

**An examination and assessment centre** run by trusted doctors.

**Medical education** - Various seminars being run for doctors and nurses from all over Moldova.

**General health education for patients**, including hygiene, sex education and other health issues.

**Washing facilities.** - The washing of clothes can be a huge problem, especially during the bitter winter months. We intend to have “Launderette” type facilities available

**Showers.** - Washing from a bucket is not easy. Some houses have some sort of shower but not many. We will have hot showers available for all, the able and the disabled. Having showers, or even toilets for the disabled is unheard of in Moldova.

We hope to set the trend and show how facilities can be provided to help the disabled and the community generally.

These are just a few of the uses for the new centre, there are plenty more. The opening has been delayed but given support will definitely open this year.



***If you feel able to make a donation to help with this project it would be wonderful.***

There is so much that needs to be done. If you have read this and our previous Newsletters you will know there are so many who live in grinding poverty. We are truly blessed in this country and should we wish we can all do something to help relieve some of this suffering. All we need is the will to do so.

Over the past 20 years we have been able to help so many and have taken several million pounds worth of humanitarian aid to Eastern Europe. When you consider this together with the huge amount of money that has been sent for various projects you will see that even a small charity can achieve a great deal.

We are a totally voluntary charity with a great deal of compassion, understanding and determination. Maybe we should be described as a "family charity"; we know all the families we help, personally, we visit Moldova several times a year, staying with families and most importantly we listen to them, and learn.

Our UK Medical team give their time voluntarily and pay their own way to help those in Moldova. Many other medical experts in England have given their time and expertise without charge. Several UK private hospitals have similarly given their services to enable some from Moldova who need medical attention to have it.

We know every school we help. We visit them regularly. Similarly the orphanages we support, we visit and get to know them all. Regrettably many of these establishments are run by corrupt and immoral people who willingly would sell anything they are given to benefit themselves, they don't care about the children. We make certain this does not happen.

We have many Moldovan friends who help us on a regular basis, again without charge. This means we can keep our finger on the pulse of life in Moldova on a daily basis without resorting to salaries, hotels, offices etc.

**What does this all mean to you?** It means we will use your donations to help others, not on salaries, rent etc. in the UK.

**What does this mean to those in Moldova?**

It means they know they are supported by a team of dedicated people determined to offer help. People who are not doing this for money but are doing it because they want to.

They know there are many who spend hours knitting pullovers, blankets etc for us to take.

They know there are many shops and manufacturers, and other organisations including Devon Trading Standards who donate new clothing for us to take.

They know there is a team, mainly female who spend hours in a cold warehouse sorting through everything we send to make certain it is all of the highest quality.

They know there are many, including children, who prepare Christmas boxes and Summer Camp Shoe boxes for them.

They know there are many people in the UK who not only sympathise but actually put their hand in their pockets and actually do something to help them.

Now imagine you are a poor family suffering in Moldova. Imagine you are a tin pot family living in a tin pot village in a country most people have never heard of. Your suffering is huge, your family all work hard but achieve so little. How depressed you would feel. Then imagine what your thoughts are when you realise there are so many people in the UK who do care about you. Who may write to you, who genuinely do care. What a morale boost that is.



Antalis Paper Suppliers ([www.antalis.co.uk](http://www.antalis.co.uk)) have kindly been donating the paper for our Newsletters for many years now and we are again very grateful to them for giving us the paper for this Newsletter.